

103.5
Lay - Nonconformity
Farther Justify'd.

Containing A
R E P L Y
To a late Pamphlet, Entitl'd,
*The Lay-Man's Pleas for Separation
from the Church of England, answer'd, &c.*
In a SECOND
D I A L O G U E
BETWEEN A
GENTLEMAN of the Town
In Communion with the
Church of England,
AND HIS
Dissenting FRIEND in the Country.

L O N D O N :

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THE P R E F A C E.



S there is not any thing that can more effectually recommend Religion to the World than Unity among those that profess it, and nothing does more sensibly hinder its progress than Contentions and Divisions;* *its hoped, that those who have it in their Power, will at last let the World see that it is in their Inclination, to lay aside those unreasonable Impositions and Unscriptural Terms of Communion, which have, for so many years, kept Protestants at so great a distance from one another. Will the long desired time never come when Christ shall be allowed to Rule alone in his own Spiritual Kingdom, and to be the Sole Lord over the Consciences of his*

* Preface to the Lay-man's Pleas, &c.

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his Subjects? When will weak and fallible men learn so much modesty as to acknowledge, that he has wisdom enough to govern, and that his Laws and Sanctions, without any additional ones of theirs, are sufficient, not only to maintain his Church, but to secure the Decency of it's Worship, and Peace and Unity among it's Members?

Thanks be to God that there are any to be found who have Courage enough to enter their public Protest against that Dominion which some seem so fond of Usurping over the minds of men, and to assert the great Redeemer's Right, in opposition to those, who not content to act as Ministers under him, seem angry because they can't break in upon his Prerogative and share with him in the Legislature.

This is a Zeal truly Christian; and tho' the Patrons of those Slaveish Doctrines, against which it is levelled, have made it their business to represent it under the most reproachful Characters, and to bear it down by Calumny because they could not do it by Argument, it will (among all those who have a value for Liberty) meet with Thanks and Applause.

There is an almost, irresistible Force and Energy in Truth; and tho' it may, by the low Artifices of ungenerous and designing men be smothered for a while, I persuade my self there will a time come, when it shall be agree'd, by the more general vote of mankind, that no more ought to be required to entitle Persons to the Privileges of the Gospel than their believing that Gospel and living accordingly. These I am sure are our Saviour's Terms, and when those who have the management of Church Affairs in their hands, will be brought to leave things

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things on that Catholick bottom, a happy Union may be expected and not before. If Persons (says the incomparable Chillingworth) would be themselves, and be content that others should be in the choice of their Religion the Servants of God and not of men, if they would allow that the way to Heaven, is not narrower than Christ left it; his yoke no heavier than he made it—if—they would become themselves, and be content that others should be plain and honest Christians—if all men would believe the Scripture and live according to it, and require no more of others—nor denying their Communion to any that do so, would so order their public service of God, that all such may, without scruple, or Hypocrisy, or Protestation against any part of it, join with them in it; who doth not see, that there would of necessity be among all men, in all things necessary—unity of opinion, and notwithstanding any other Differences that are or could be, Unity of Communion and Charity, and mutual Toleration? By which all Schism would be banished the world, and those wretched Contentions, which now rend and tear in pieces not the Coat, but the members and Bowels of Christ, which mutual Pride and Tyranny would fain make immortal, should speedily receive a blessed Catastrophe.*

As to my self, though I am one of those Protestants who can not fall in with the present Ecclesiastical Establishment, I think I am a hearty lover of Peace and Universal Charity. What I have offered in the following Papers is in my own Vindication, without any design of perpetuating

* Chillingworth's works Edit. ult. p. 183.

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perpetuating a Difference which I should rejoice to see an End to. Every man has a right to give Reasons for his Religion, and the way of worship he has made choice of, and to Defend these Reasons when he is call'd upon to do so; so that I can't see that this Performance needs any Apology.

I think I have considered every thing material in The Lay-man's Pleas, &c. I can't say I have followed the Author Paragraph by Paragraph throughout the whole Pamphlet, because I have sometimes, to avoid confusion, brought things, relating to the same Head, as near together as I could, though they lay perhaps at several Pages distance, but I am not apprehensive of any one Passage of Importancæ to the Controversy between us, that I have not taken notice of. As to the strength of the Arguments on both sides the world must judge.





Lay - Nonconformity

Farther Justify'd.

Con. Sir I am your humble Servant. You are the Person I had last in my thoughts, and with whom I was wishing for a few hours Conversation. I hope the business which has brought you to Town is not extraordinary; and, if possible, pray let me have, this Afternoon, the favour of your good company.

Non. I thank you Sir for your kind Invitation; and know not how to resist the Importance of so valuable a Friend. I have indeed an affair of some consequence to be dispatch'd before I return home; but I believe it will not take up a great deal of time, and perhaps it may be done towards the close of the Evening as well as now, and I am at your Service.

Con. You oblige me beyond expression: For, to tell you the truth, I have been for several weeks longing to have a little farther discourse with you on those Heads which we talk'd over when I was at your House last, and which you thought fit soon after to publish to the world. But, by the way, will you give me leave to ask you one Question. Have you seen a late Pamphlet, entitled, *The Lay-man's Pleas, for separation from the Church of England, answered?*

Non.

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Non. I have both seen and perused the Pamphlet you speak of; I am none of those who apply themselves only to such Books as they already know, by the general Character of them, agree with their present thoughts, favour their Inclinations and confirm their Tenets.* As far as I know my self, I am a sincere Enquirer after Truth; and therefore in all disputable matters, have reckoned my self obliged to study the points in Controversy with an unbiassed and equitable Indifference; to consult the Writings of the contending Parties with a resolution to be open to Conviction, and to give Judgment for that side of the Question, be it which it will, which appears to carry the greatest probability along with it, and I can assure you I read the Book we are talking of, with such a Disposition.

Con. I am very glad to hear you say this; and if you please we will in a friendly way debate the strength of the Arguments you urg'd in your *Lay Nonconformity Justified*, and the Answers which have been given to them.

Non. If you could be so satisfied, for my part, I had much rather be excused from entering again upon this Controversy. Time I know is short, and an Eternity depends upon a due Improvement of it, so that if Christians would make it their business to do what good they can in their several Stations; Study to discharge their Duty and to provide for an Everlasting World; this would be more pleasing to God and infinitely more profitable to themselves than their employing so many of their thoughts about things which are at so great a distance from the Life and Heart of Religion,† and which (when contended for with the heat that is usual on such occasions) narrow men's Judgments as well as their Charity, sour their tempers, and make them Indifferent about matters of vastly greater consequence. However that you may not accuse me of obstinacy, nor my own Friends of Cowardice, I agree for this once to reconsider the thing in dispute between us.

Con.

* Layman's Pleas for Separation Answered, p. 2. † Tillerton's Serm 5th. Edit. Fol. p. 196.

Con. Since you have consented to my proposal then, pray don't be offended if I tell you, without any farther ceremony, that I think "you have very ingenuously acknowledged your self to be guilty of a most notorious *Schism* even in the Judgment of the Learned Mr. *Hales* whose *Treatise* your Teachers admire and commend, and frequently quote to clear themselves of that heavy charge."*

Non. There are some people in the world, I perceive who are very quick at making discoveries and can see almost any thing they have a mind to; especially when it favours a notion they have a particular kindness for. But I do assure you Sir, I am so far from thinking that any thing I have said amounts to such an acknowledgement, as your Friend insinuates, that I could be content to have Mr. *Hales* determine the point between us.

I own (as I told you formerly) that my falling into an acquaintance with some *Dissenters*, who were lately come into the neighbourhood, was the first occasion of my going to hear the *Nonconformists*. Not that my mind had been entirely free from scruples for several years before; I saw a great many things in the Established way which I could not heartily fall in with, and should have been glad to see rectified the languishing State of Religion in the parish where I lived, and the great want of vital Holiness among many, who valued themselves highly upon their zeal for the *Church* and *Ceremonies*, was what I thought very much to be lamented. As for the *Dissenters* I had heard them call'd by the opprobrious names of *Fanaticks*, *Schismaticks*, &c. and so many strange Things said of those of their Persuasion, that when some of them came to be Neighbours to me, I made particular Remarks upon their Way of living, which I found so vastly different from the Representation which had been given me, that I could not but be pleas'd with their Conversations and company and willing to see how they managed in their Religious Assemblies. I had read their *Catechism* and

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Confession

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Confession of Faith several times over, and found them so agreeable to the *Word of God* and the *Articles of the Church of England* that I was under no fear of hearing any Doctrine Preach'd that was false or Heretical ; and I thought with my self, that when I had seen their way of worship, I should be the better able to judge of the merits of the cause between the Establishment and them. On these considerations I went several times to hear one of their Ministers who goes under the denomination of a *Presbyterian*. I thought of the matter with all the Seriousnes which an affair of this consequence call'd for ; consulted several of the best Books which had been published in behalf of Conformity ; considered their Arguments, and begg'd of God to direct me into the way of Truth and Peace : But, after all, my *Scraples* increased upon me and finding the way of the Dissenters so much more for my *Spiritual Advantage* than that which I had been bred up in, I could not avoid coming to this conclusion in my own thoughts ; that should I not chuse that method of worshiping which was most agreeable to the dictates of my own Conscience, and most conducive to my Eternal Welfare, I shou'd sin against God, and prejudice my self in a concern of all others the most momentous. Now Sir, I would be glad to know what you can see in Mr. Hales which condemns a Separation upon my Principles as *Schismatical*. This I am sure of, in the opinion of that Learned Man, when *Acts either unlawful, or ministering just scruple are required of us to be preformed*, a Dissent is so far from being criminal that it becomes a Duty ; and that *cause upon which Division is attempted, proceeds not from passion or distemper or from Ambition or Avarice, or such other Ends as human folly is apt to pursue ; but from well weigh'd and necessary Reasons* ; and that *when all means have been tryed nothing will serve to save us from guilt of Conscience but open Separation* ;* this does not only *Justify* such a *Separation*, but makes it *necessary*. If then you believe

* Vid. *Hales of Schism*, 4to, p. 227

believe the account which I have given you of my *Nonconformity* (and unless my Reputation has been forfeited, I have an equal right to credit with you and the rest of mankind) I appeal to your self, whether Mr. *Hales* has not fully acquitted me of the guilt you seem so forward to charge me with.

Con. I attend to your Discourse. But if you mind it, *Schism* is defined by Mr. *Hales* to be *an unnecessary Separation from that part of the visible Church of which Persons were once Members* (to which I add) “ or “ to which they are bound to join themselves ; and it “ is plain beyond dispute that the Old *Nonconformists* “ judg’d the Church of *England* a true and sound “ part of the visible Church, and that *Lay-communion* “ was not only lawful but *necessary*. ”*

Non. I very well remember Mr. *Hales*’s Definition of *Schism*, and though it be not, in my opinion the most accurate (since there may be a *Schism* where there is no Separation from *external Communion*, as in the Church of *Corinth*†) yet I will not insist upon that now, because the aforementioned Author has (as I have told you once already) expressly declared, that when a man can’t comply with some Terms which a Church enjoins, without *Sinning against Conscience*, *Separation* becomes *necessary*. As to the Old *Nonconformists*, I have only this to say ; that I have no reason to act against the present persuasion of my own mind in compliance with their Sentiments ; supposing therefore your Friend’s Quotations from Dr. *Owen*, Mr. *Cotton*, &c. to be fair (for having not the Books by me, I have no opportunity to examine them) what are they to his purpose ? One thing however I would remark by the way, *viz.* that Dr. *Owen* who is said to judge *Lay-communion* not only *Lawful* but *Necessary* ; preach’d to a considerable Congregation of *Dissenters*, and continued, I think, to do so to the time of his Death ; which (supposing what your Author insinuates to be true) must argue him to be a man of no conscience, nor so much as com-

* *Lay-man’s Pleas Answered*, p. 32. † Ἀκούεις σὺ τὸ μέγατον εἰπεῖν εἰπεῖν.
2019, 1. Corin. 11, 18.

mon Honesty. That several of the *Nonconformists* after the Act of Uniformity did conform to the Church of *England* as *Laymen*, while they were dissatisfied about the terms of *Ministerial Conformity* is easily granted; and that their doing so, is an evidence, that *Lay-conformity* was what *they* could comply with, without Sinning no one questions; but to infer from hence that they condemn Lay-separation in *others* who saw things in a different Light, and had scruples upon their minds which they were not able to get rid of, is no consequence. Have you any thing more to offer with regard to Mr. *Hales*?

Con. Yes. He "affirms that the *Donatists* were
 " *Schismatics*, and one of the chief Reasons for their
 " Separations was an opinion, that where Good and
 " Bad met together for Divine Worship, pollution eva-
 " porating as it were from Sinners unhallowed all the De-
 " votions of the Righteous--From hence its plain that
 " that Learned Author declares *Separation* from a
 " particular Church to be a *Schism* without naming any
 " thing of *Uncharitableness*.*

Non. The *Schism* of the *Donatists* (if you will allow such great men as *Chillingworth* and *Archbishop Tillotson* to know any thing of their History and Principles) was; their giving out, that *they were the only true Church of Christ out of which none could be saved*. † This Mr. *Hales* tells you likewise; though your Author did not think it for his turn, that his Readers should be acquainted with that part of the account, Supposing then that Mr. *Hales* does not mention the word *Uncharitableness*, when he is upon that Head, seeing there could not be a more uncharitable Principle in the world, than that which these People went upon; it's plain that in the opinion of that Learned Writer, *Schism* must be supposed to include *Uncharitableness* in it. But since you have mentioned the *Schism* of the *Donatists*, I have one Request to make you, and that is, that you would at your leisure, read these men's distinguishing Principles, and compare them with theirs,

* *Lay-man's Pleas, &c.* p. 33. † *Tillotson's Serm.* 5th Edit. Fol. p. 364;
Chillingworth's Religion, &c. Edit. ult. p. 129.

theirs, who condemn not only the *Nonconformists* in *England*, but all the *Protestant Churches Abroad*; pronounce their Ordinations *null*, all their Administrations *invalid*, and make no Scruple to say that they have no Ministers, nor Sacraments, but are *cut off* from the *Catholick Church*, and left to the uncovenanted Mercy of God Almighty; and tell me, Whether there be not a very near Resemblance between these uncharitable *Bigots*, and the old *African Schismatics* we are talking of. For my part I can see no other Difference between them but this, that tho' our *Highflyers* condemn all the *Reformed Churches upon Earth*, whose Constitution, Discipline and Government is not the same with their own; yet they are free to acknowledge, that the *Superstitions, Persecuting, Idolatrous Church of Rome* is a Church of Christ, * and entertain very kind and favourable Thoughts of those of that Communion, whereas the *Donatists* Charity extended no farther than themselves. And now I am talking of Charity, pray how came it to pass that you did not proceed a little farther with your Author when you quoted him last? What made you leave off where you did, without adding his following Words, *viz.*

“ After all the Pretences to Charity and Moderation
 “ amongst our present *Dissenters*, there are few In-
 “ stances of it to be met withal, unles reviling the
 “ Clergy, ridiculing the Service, railing at the Consti-
 “ tution, &c. may be reckon'd Instances of Charity
 “ and good Nature.” † Perhaps you thought that
 this Language was too scurrilous to be repeated in
 Conversation with your Friend, and apprehended that
 it would exasperate; but I do assure you, Sir, this
 little spiteful Reflection would not at all have discom-
 posed me; I could have made Allowances for the in-
 temperate Heat of a *new Convert*, and you would ea-
 sily have seen that I thought the *Calumny* worthy of
 Contempt, rather than a sober Confutation,

Con.

Con. Come, good Sir, don't be angry : Let us pursue our Argument calmly. " Your fine-spun Notion, " that the Church of *England*, as *National*, is not pretended to be of *Divine Right*, and therefore that a Separation from a *National Church* which the New Testament knows not, cannot be the *Schism* which the Scripture warns us against, is such a Piece of Reason as can hardly be parallel'd." *

Non. It is, I find, abundantly easier for some Disputants to ridicule an Argument, than to give a solid Answer to it ; and, generally speaking, this is thought the shortest Way with the *Dissenters*. But if you please, let us hear what your Author has to say against the Notion he speaks so contemptibly of ; for since we have begun, I would not have you slip any thing which you think of Weight in that Performance.

Con. " If there could be a *Schism* in the Church of *Corinth*, which (according to your mistaken Notion) was a particular Church, pray what should hinder that there cannot be the like *Schism* in St. *Dunstan's Church* in *London*, which is a Part of the *National Church*, or in any other *Parish Church* in the Kingdom ? " †

Non. According to my mistaken Notion ! Does your Friend think then that the Church of *Corinth* was not a particular Church ? If he does, I must recommend to his Consideration what St. *Paul* writes about their coming together in one Place ; and that not a part of them, but the whole *Church*, || &c. and by that time he has thought upon such Expressions, as these, perhaps he will have the Ingenuity to acknowledge that his is a mistaken Notion, and not mine. But let us a little examine his Reasoning on this Head, because I think it peculiar. If there could be a *Schism* in the Church of *Corinth*, &c. what should hinder that there cannot be the like *Schism* in St. *Dunstan's Church* in *London*, or in any other Parish Church in the Kingdom ? What should hinder ? Truly nothing that I know

* *Layman's Pleas*, &c. p. 34. † *Ibid.* p. 34. || 1 Cor. ix. 18, 20, Chap. xiv. 23.

know of ; for I never thought that our conforming Brethren had a greater Command of their Tempers than other People, or that they were so perfectly made up of good Humour, but that there might happen to be Heats and uncharitable Contentions amongst them, as well as those of other Societies. Indeed a noted Preacher of yours has observ'd of late of the Liturgy of the Church of *England*, that as it *eminently promotes Loyalty* in such as attend it *as Subjects*, so doth it *mutual Charity* in them *as Neighbours*. * But as it has sadly fail'd of the first of these good Effects on some of its greatest Admirers, since King *George's* happy Accession to the Throne of these Kingdoms, so it has of the last too in abundance of Instances ; and I wish the Doctor I refer to (begging his Pardon for this Freedom) had not given the World occasion to say that he himself is one. Well, we will grant then that there may be a *Schism* in St. *Dunstan's* Church in *London*, and in any other *Parish* Church in the Kingdom ; but what would your Author infer from hence ? For my part, after having read the Paragraph twenty times over, I was entirely at a loss for the Sense of it ; and at last concluded, that when it was thrown into a Syllogism it must stand thus, *viz.*

If there could be a *Schism* in the Church of *Corinth*, which was a *particular* Church, and can be the like in St. *Dunstan's* Church in *London*, or in any other *Parish* Church in the Kingdom ;

Then Separation from a *National* Church, which the New Testament knows not, is the *Schism* which the Scripture warns us against.

But there could be a *Schism* in the Church of *Corinth*, &c. Ergo, &c.

Strong Reasoning. It's great pity in my Mind that the Gentleman should forget to conclude with a Q. E. D. for if he had done so, tho' some saucy *Fanatick* or other

other might have had so little Manners as to call upon him to prove the *Sequel* of his *Major*, he might have met with some Readers who would have thought his Argument as certain as any Proposition in *Euclid's Elements*.

Con. Come let us have no Banter : I believe I have something to offer which you yourself will reckon worthy a serious Consideration. "The Catholick Church is made up of several Societies of Christians, in the several Parts of the World : Therefore, in order to a Christian's being united to the Catholick Church, it is *absolutely necessary* that he join himself to one *particular Church* that is a Part of the Whole, which the Church of *England* is acknowledged to be ; or, if you like it better, which the several *Parish Churches* in *England* are Parts of. Whosoever therefore cuts himself off from one of those *particular Churches*, (which is a true and found Part of the Catholick Church) does as effectually cut off himself from the *whole Body*, as he that cuts off a Finger cuts it off from his Body, tho' it is immediately separated from the Hand. *

Non. I find it's time for me to look to myself, because your Friend seems resolv'd to make a *Pagan* of me. Methinks such an Attempt does not discover an Excess of Charity ; and he must not blame me, if I will not give up my *Christianity* without strugling for it. And here I would ask him, Whether he is able to prove, that in order to a Person's being united to the Catholick Church, it is *absolutely necessary* that he join himself to one *particular Church*, that is a Part of the Whole ; because (as the famous Chillingworth observes) *a Man unjustly Excommunicated, is not in the Churches Communion, yet he is still a Member of the Church.* † To which I add, a Person may by the Providence of God, have his Lot cast amongst a People who are all *Infidels* or *Idolaters*, and never have an Opportunity of being united in *external Communion* with

* *Layman's Pleas*, p. 34. † *Religion of Protestants, &c.* p. 196.

with any particular Church ; and yet if he sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and subject himself to his Laws and Government, he is a Member of the Catholick Church, and regarded by God as such. But that which I would particularly remark in what you last offered is, your saying that *whoever cuts himself off from one of these particular Churches, (which is a true and sound Part of the Catholick Church)* cuts off himself from the whole Body. Now if by a Man's cutting himself off from a particular Church, you mean a Departure from those Things which are essential to a true Church of Christ, that is, from the Profession and Practice of Christianity, I agree with you, that by so doing he cuts himself off from the Church Catholick : But if you mean by a Person's cutting himself off from a particular Church, his Separation only from its external Communion, and that on the Account of some Terms which are made necessary, and yet at the same Time are unwarrantable, or at least apprehended by him to be so, (and this you must mean, or what you say is nothing to the Purpose) I absolutely deny that by such a Separation he cuts himself off from the Catholick Church ; because, notwithstanding such a Separation from a Church of which he was once a Member, he may continue united by Faith to Christ the Head of the Church, and by a cordial Love to all the Members of it, and join in Communion with some other Part of the Catholick Church, where no Terms are insisted on but such as he thinks Scriptural, and which he can with a good Conscience comply with. The Established Church in North Britain, I believe all Men of Temper amongst you will allow to be a Part of the Catholick Church ; but should the Presbyterians there tell their Episcopal Brethren, that by separating from their Communion they had cut themselves off from the Church Catholick, I doubt not but you would make loud Exclamations against them for their Uncharitableness ; and yet I can't see but they have as much Reason to conclude thus against them, as you have against us. But perhaps that Matter may fall in our Way again before we have done, and therefore if you have any

thing farther to say under the Head of *Schism*, please to proceed.

Con. I think " that the *Dissenters* who persuaded " you to go to a *Meeting-house* with them, did not act " so *Honestly* or *Honourably* as they ought to have " done. — It looks too like an *Abuse* of that *Indul- gence* which the Government allows them. Neither " did you behave yourself like an *honest* Man in leaving " the *Communion* of the Church of *England* upon " such slight Occasion; nay, by your own Confession, " for no Reason at all." *

Non. I never told you that the *Dissenters* persuaded me to go to a *Meeting-hcuse* with them; tho' your Friend has so much Disingenuity (to say no worse of it) as to tell the World so. But suppose this had been true: What was there *Dishonest* or *Dishonourable* in their persuading me to hear a Sermon in a Congregation *Allowed* and *Protected* by the same Government to which your own *Church* owes her *Establishment*? Especially when I had all the Assurance in the World that I should be entertain'd with no other Doctrine than what the Church herself makes a Profession of. With regard to their *abusing* the *Indulgence* given them; I must be so free as to say, that I look upon this as a *s spiteful Insinuation*, and too plain a Discovery what some People in the World would be at, had they the Management of Things in their own Hands; but Thanks be to God their *Power* is not equal to their *Envy*. As to myself, let it be sufficient to tell you, that the Reasons which determined me to separate from the Church of *England* were such as I thought abundantly satisfactory; and I am the more confirm'd in this, since I read your Author's Reply to them. And tho' he has thought fit to make very free with my *Honesty*, it is a Comfort to me that this does not at all depend upon his Opinion; I know I must be accountable in a little While to a more Impartial Judge,

and

and then it will appear whether I have behaved myself like an *honest* Man, or not.

Con. I ask your Pardon, if I have said any thing that bears hard. But to be plain, I can't help thinking that you were too precipitate in your Measures, especially considering that it was a Business in which your Salvation was concern'd. " If you had really been uneasy " at any thing in our Church — you ought to have " apply'd yourself to the *Minister* of your *Parish* — " till you left the Church he was undoubtedly your " *Director* and *Guide* in all your Spiritual Concerns." *

Non. Suppose then, that the *Minister* of the *Parish* where I lived should be a Person that was *ignorant* and *unqualified*, and not capable of giving me the Satisfaction I wanted ; or suppose he was too *passionate* to bear a *Contradiction* ; or so much *prejudiced* against *Dissenters*, as not to be able to keep within the Bounds of common Decency when he was talking of them ; must I take a Man of such a Character to be my *Director* and *Guide* in all my Spiritual Concerns ? Besides, (allowing the Case to be otherwise) where is the Man (as one very well observes) so much mortified to all *Self-Interest and Regard*, as to be free from all *Partiality in his Judgment of Things*, where he himself hath any *Ccern*? To which give me Leave to add, that tho' I have a great Veneration for those of the *Sacred Function*, yet I could never apprehend it my Duty to be determined by their Judgment *against* my own Light and Sentiments. I think (with a great Divine of your own Church) that when *against our own Mind carefully informed*, we follow the *Dictates of others*, we, like *Fools*, rashly adventure and prostitute our Souls. † To conclude this Head. I do assure you, Sir, I was not so *ra' h* in this Attair as you fancy ; but acted with all the Deliberation and Seriousnes I was capable of. I own I did not think myself obliged to advise with the *Minister* of the *Parish* about my *Nonconformity*, because

* *Layman's Reasons*, p. 5. † *Dr. Barron's Works*, Vol. III. p. 307.

tho' he is the *legal* Incumbent, and I chearfully pay him his *Dues* whenever he pleases to send for them; I know of no Law of God which has made him my Minister; because he was forced upon me as well as a great many others, and I never chose him for my Spiritual Guide and Director.

Con. I perceive then you will still insist on the People's *Right* to chuse their own Ministers, which I can't but wonder at. " If your *Latitudinarian* Principle holds true, I don't know but that in a little Time every Master of a Family may set up to be a Priest in his own House; and that infamous Book the *Rights*, may come to be the truest and best Account of Church Government. How is it possible to pre-serve *Unity* and *Peace* according to such a Notion as yours? — I need not tell you what *Feuds* and *Ani-mosities* have risen amongst *Dissenters* in their *Elections*. — So that you have no great Reason to value yourselves on the Account of 'em." *

N.n. I have nothing to do with the *Book* you speak of, nor with that Author's Notion of Church Government, my Busines being only to vindicate my own Principles. And now I appeal to yourself, whether from the People's Right to chuse their Ministers, to argue that it would be warrantable for them to break up all Publick Religious Societies, and not to worship God in Assemblies at all, has so much as the Appearance of good Reasoning.

As to *Peace* and *Unity*, as far as I can find, they are as well preserv'd in our Way as in yours; and if Occasion were, I could mention several Dissenting Congregations within the Compass of my Acquaintance, in which (upon the Death or Removal of Ministers) Successors have been elected with the greatest Unanimity; and where there has happen'd to be a little Disagreement in filling up a Vacancy, the Minority have peaceably acquiesc'd in the Determination of the major Part, and Things have been settled to the general

ral Satisfaction. I know your Friend talks of Feuds and Animosities which have risen in the Choice of Ministers and gives an Instance or two of it; but I don't think it worth my while to make a particular Enquiry into the Truth of 'em. Suppose it be granted that some Inconveniences may accidentally arise from that Right of the People which I am contending for, does it therefore follow, that they must part with that Right, and suffer themselves to be imposed upon? I take this Argument to be the very same which those of another Communion make use of to justify their Tyranny over the Consciences of the Layity, *viz.* that the People make an ill use of *Judging* for themselves; and I think Archbishop *Tillotson's* Answer to them is very much to our purpose. There may be an ill Use made of Men's *judging* for themselves (and I say the same of their chooling their own Ministers) "but then it is to be considered, that the proper Remedy in this case, is not to deprive Men of their Privilege, but to use the best means to prevent the Abuse of it. For though the Inconveniences arising from the ill Use of it may be very great, the Mischief on the other hand is intolerable. Religion it self is liable to be abused to very bad purposes, and frequently is so; but it is not therefore best that there should be no Religion at all."* I had no need to tell you what Feuds and Animosities have been occasioned by the People's Electing their *Representatives* in Parliament, but I hope you would not conclude from hence, that, to prevent that Inconvenience, it would be best to give up that part of our Constitution, and take the Right of the People entirely from them. To all which suffer me to add the Words of Mr. *Baxter*, to Dr. *Stillingfleet*, "let him name me Ten Places that have suffered so deeply by the People's Choice as I can tell him of ten Thousand that have done by the Choice of Prelates, Patrons, &c. and I will confess my Error. †

Con.

* *Tillotson's Serm.* Fol. 5th. Edit. p. 234. † *Baxter's Second true Defence of the Nonconformists,* &c. p. 351.

Con. "But you are bound to join your self to that Society where you live, unless you can prove that the Terms of Communion are *unlawful*. It is not your complaining of your parish Minister that will justify your breaking the Unity of the Church."*

Non. I must, you say, join my self to the Society where I live unless I can prove the Terms of Communion to be unlawful but (to use the word's of one of your own Bishops † with a little variation) *to whom must I prove this? Or to whose Satisfaction? To their Satisfaction who are confident of the contrary, or to my own?* It is sufficient sure if I my self am fully persuaded that the Terms are unlawful; and when that is the case, I am obliged in Conscience to separate from such a Society, tho' I can't convince others that my Argument have any weight in them. We will suppose however, that in the Society where I live, there should be no Terms of Communion enjoined, but what I could lawfully comply with; yet, seeing *Parochial* bounds are not so much as pretended to be of a Divine Settlement, if my parish Minister should neglect or carelessly perform the necessary Duties of his Function, and did not Preach to my Edification; tho' these would not justify my breaking the Unity of the Church, I think it would sufficiently warrant my joining with some other Congregation, where my Soul was like to be better provided for, and I shall continue of this mind, until I hear other Reasons to the contrary, than I have as yet met with.

Con. Now we are talking of parish Ministers, I am put in mind of some Insinuations of yours at our last Conference which "have not that Christian Charity you so much extoll, viz. If a Clergy man gets Institution and Induction, let him be what he will, sober or scandalous, Qualified or Unqualified, &c. The Clergy of the Church of England have the advantage of a liberal Education in one of the famous Universities. When they go into Holy Orders, they are obliged to carry a Testimonial from the College or Hall

* Lay-man's Pleas. p. 7. † Bishop of Bangor's Preservative, 1st Edit. p. 85, 86.

" *Hall* that they belong'd to, and if they have lived
 " in the Country for a considerable time before their
 " Admission into Orders, a Certificate is required
 " from three neighbouring Clergymen, concerning
 " their Life and Conversation, &c. now since this
 " care is taken in the Church, you ought to have spar-
 " ed that Reflection." *

Non. I wonder to here you talk of a Reflection, when any one may see that the words you censure me for, could not be spoken with any such Intention, and that my design was only to shew you, what a hardship it is to Parishes to have Ministers imposed upon them. I know the Clergy of the Church of *England* have (a great many of them) such an Education as you speak of, and undoubtedly this must be a vast Advantage to such as know how to make a good Improvement of it. Indeed no less a Man than the famous Mr. *Le-Clerc* mentions it as a *Common Report*, that the *Academick Establishments in England are no better than Seminaries of Idle People who have no regular method of studying.* † But I hope that Learned Gentleman had a better Opinion of them. This is certain, our *Universities* have produced many very great men, such as have filled the highest Stations both in Church and State with Honour, and been a Glory to the *English Nation*; and yet when an Eminent Prelate (one who must be allowed by all the world to be a competent Judge) has given us such a melancholy account of the much greater part of those who come to be Ordain'd, and told the world in so many words, that some of them *in a well regulated State of things, would appear not knowing enough to be admitted to the Holy Sacra-ment.* ‡ I cant imagine why my words (which when you have made the most of them amount but to a Supposition) should be thought so uncharitable. As to the Point of *Scandal*, I have only to say, I wish with my whole heart, that Ministers of all Denominations would be more mindful of the Character they bear,
 and

* *Lay-man's Pleas, &c.* p. 7. † *Mr. Le-Clerc's Life of Dr. Burnet late Bishop of Sarum,* p. 20. ‡ *Preface to the Pastoral Care, 3d Edit.* p. 3.

and endeavour to shine as Lights in the World. The Behaviour of such as pretend to be Guides to others is particularly observed ; and their *Actions* discover what they are better than *Testimonials* from Colleges, &c. and when we have said all, People will judge by these, as indeed it is fit they should. But there's enough of this. Have you any thing more to offer against the people's *Rights* to Elect their own Ministers, and can you give me a Reason why they should not make choice of their spiritual Guides, as well as of their *Physicians* and *Lawyers*, when they have occasion for them?

Con. " I'll give you a Reason ; neither the Laws of " God nor Man have given you such a Liberty *.

Non. This is easily said, and I think as easily confuted. I am sure, I had no need to tell you that by the *Act of Toleration*, which (thanks be to God) stands yet unrepeal'd. *Protestants* are allowed, (on the *Proviso's* therein mentioned) to worship God in such a way as their own Consciences shall approve of; and consequently, to make choice of their own Ministers ; so that the Law of the Land has given us the Liberty, I am pleading for ; and that the Law of God warrants the same, I think I plainly enough proved to you at our last Conference.

Con. Well, we will talk more of that presently ; but let us first a little consider, what you said just now about the Right of the People to chuse their *Physicians*, when they have occasion for them ; because I think, on this Head my Friend has by much the advantage of you ; and when I have repeated the Substance of what he has offered, I am in hopes you your self will say so too. " Suppose by an *Act of Parliament* a Physician " was placed in every Parish, and the Person placed " in yours had a sufficient Skill in curing any Distem- " per that you was afflicted with, &c. — would " not any Man think that you are guided by Humour " and Fancy, if you neglect to send for your own " Physician, under whose management you may be safe, " and

* Lay man's Plea, &c. p. 8.

" and make use of another, meerly because the Physick he
" prescribes is more agreeable to your Palate, which at
" present is vitiated by the height of the Distemper?*

Non. I ask pardon for interrupting you: But give me leave to say, your Friend has not stated the case fairly. If you will suffer me, I will set this matter in a truer light, and when you have done, make your Objections as you see convenient.

Suppose then by an Act of Parliament, a Physician was placed in every Parish of the Kingdom, and the Person settled in mine had as much skill in curing Distempers as most of that Faculty; suppose again, another Act of Parliament allowed me (if I thought it best) to advise either with a Physician of any another Parish, or with one in my own, who had the Government's leave to Practice, if any pleas'd to make use of him; suppose once more, that after several Years tryal of the Parish Physician, I found that his Prescriptions were not adapted to my Case, so that I continued in the same languishing State, as when I first call'd him to my assistance; suppose lastly, that I had taken the Advice of another Physician, and found that he really understood my Circumstances better, and that I perceiv'd my Constitution more mended in a few weeks under his care, than I did all the time I was under the others management; the Question is whether it ought to be call'd *Humour and Fancy*, if I resolve to persevere in that method which I had found, by the Blessing of God, so Advantagious to me, and whether I should not be blam'd by all the World, if I had so little regard to my own Health, as to sacrifice it in complaisance to an Establishment? And now I leave you to make the Application.

Con. I hear you. But while it is in my thoughts, pray what warrant can you find in the Word of God, for the People's Right of chusing their Ministers? I remember you did mention a Text or two the last time which you thought favour'd this Notion; but for

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my part I can't see that they are any thing to your purpose. What you offered about the Choice of an *Apostle* to succeed *Judas*, I am confident can do you no manner of Service. I don't know from what part of the chapter you conclude, that the design of the Apostles meeting at that time, was to fill up the Vacancy. " It seems more probable that there was a " good number (about Six-score) gathered together to " the public Service of God. St. Peter addressed him- " self to the *Eleven* and not to the *whole number*— " And *they*, viz. the *Eleven* appointed two ; leaving " it to the *Lots* to decide which of them it should be, " and the *Lot* fell on *Matthias*. *

Non. I don't think it material to enquire what was the principal Design of that Meeting, in which *Matthias* was chosen to the Apostleship (*Act*s 1.) That Public Worship was Solemniz'd on that occasion, is what I would not make a Question of; but seeing an *Apostle* was then chosen, and we have such a full and particular Account of the proceedings in that Affair, I can't see why we may not suppose that this was their Principal Business, at that Meeting, and let your Author prove the contrary if he is able. Be that as it will; this we are sure of, that when it is said, *Peter stood up in the midst of the Disciples* it is immediately added *the number of the Names were about an Hundred and Twenty*, v. 16. Now if his Discourse had been directed to the *Eleven only*, and not to the *whole Company*. I can't see what occasion there was to mention the *number* then present. It seems plain enough to me that St. Peter address'd himself to the *whole Company*, and *they* (i. e. the *whole Company*) appointed two. *Apolo-
toli ceterique Fidelas duos nominarunt.* † *The Electors
or Persons chusing* (says a late Commentator of your own) *were the Hundred and Twenty.* ‡ So that allowing Dr. Hammnd to be right as to the Etymology and Meaning of the original Word *αιρετισθαι* and that *Matthias* was chosen by *Lot*; yet He and *Joseph* were, in

* Lay-man's Pleas; &c, p. 9. † Vid. Poli Synop. in loc. ‡ Vid. Burk's loc.

in all probability, nominated by the *Disciples*; from which it may be fairly collected, that the People ought to be concern'd in the Election of their Ministers which is all I have been contending for.

Con. "Your other Instance in the 6th of *Acts*,
" concerning the Choice of the Seven *Deacons* fall
" much short off proving the Point in Debate.*

Non. I can't be of your mind. For tho' the Apostles reserved the *Ordination* of these *Deacons* to themselves, it's most evident that the *Church* were to look out the men. Your Author acknowledges as much as this comes to, and it as much as I desire to have granted me. For if the People were to make Choice of the Persons, who were to be entrusted with the *Stock*, which they had raised for the use of the Poor, certainly they had reason to have a Vote in the Election, of those to whom the care of their *Souls* was to be committed, a Concern without doubt, of infinitely greater Consequence than the other.

And since we are fallen once more upon this Head, I would fain know, why our Saviour should give us such Cautions as these, † viz. *Take heed what you hear, and how ye hear &c.* and to what purpose it was for the Apostle to tell us, not to believe every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God, if we were to receive any Minister that a Patron thought fit to impose upon us?

To strengthen what I have said on this Argument, I might mention those *Canons* of *Councils*, and Testimonies from particular Fathers, which have been several times quoted by those who have managed this Dispute formerly.|| But at present I see no necessity for it. Nothing is more certain than that in the purest Ages of the Church, Bishops (or Pastors) were *Elected* by the *Faithful*.** A very Learned, and Excellent Dr. of your own Speaking of Ordinations in the Primitive Times tells us, that "the People of the place were al-

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* Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 9. + Mark 4, 24. Luke 8, 18. 1 John 4, 1. ¶ Turretin Theology, Part, 3. p. 256, 257. Rule's, Rational Defense, &c. p. 201, 202, 203. ** Vid. L. E. du. Ping Bib. Pat. vol. I. p. 28.

" ways present, and ratified the Action with their App-
" probation and Consent, and that it was seldom or
" never done without their Presence and Suffrage. ††
And the same worthy Author tells us farther, that
" this way seemed so fit and reasonable, that Severus
" the Emperour (a wise and prudent Prince) in imitati-
" on of the Christians, established it in the disposal of
" civil Offices. For when he had a mind to send out
" any Governours of Provinces—he propounded the
" Names of those he intended, desiring the People to
" except against the Persons, if they knew them guilty
" of any Crimes, which they were able to make good
" against them."* To all which I shall only add, that
another of your Writers (and a very furious stickler
for the Church and Power of the Clergy) has told
you in so many words, *that the People had votes in the
Choice of Bishops all must grant, and it can be only Ignorance and Folly that pleads the contrary.* † Now if they
always had, and still have such a Right, undoubtedly
they are greatly injured in having it wrested from
them; and I don't know but that this consideration
alone, had I nothing else to offer in my Vindication,
would be a sufficient Justification of my Nonconfor-
mity.

Con. I remember we were just now talking of *Dea-
cons* and " I have often wondred that none of your
" Teachers have ever said a word in Vindication of
" themselves for casting that *Order* out of the Church,
" which there seems to be so much occasion for, as
" there was at the first Institution of it."||

Non. That there was such Officers as *Deacons*, ap-
pointed in the Apostles time, I believe is not made a
question of, but what sort of an Office, theirs was,
you know has not been so fully agreed upon. If you
please therefore we will a little Examine into the first
Institution of it; and when we have done so, it may
be, the Dissenters conduct with regard to this, wont
long continue a matter of so much wonder to you.

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†† *Cave's Primitive Christianity*, p. 160, 16'. * *Ibid* + *Lewish o
Church Power*, p. 19. || *Layman's Pleas, &c.* p. 10.

There's no doubt but you have observed, in reading the New Testament, that at the first planting the Christian Church, the Disciples of Christ had such a hearty Affection for one another, that they with a generous freedom distributed what they had amongst their necessitous Brethren, and were content to be supply'd out of one general stock, and to Enjoy all things in *Common*, Acts 2. 44. Now though, in the beginning, the Apostles themselves took care to receive the Church's Goods, and to supply their Members as they saw occasion; yet while their numbers increased, the burden of this Eleemosynary care increased also; and indeed began to grow too great for them; and besides, some complaints were made by the Greeks that *their Widows were neglected in the daily Ministrations*, Acts 6. 1. Upon which the Apostles saw it expedient to appoint *Deacons*, that the Poor might be the better provided for. You see then that the great business of these Officers was to manage the Public Charity, and *diaconis regnante* to serve *Tables*, Acts 6. 2. Whether there is as much occasion for these now, as there was in the afore mentioned circumstances of the Church is what I shall not at present enquire into; neither shall I stay to examine whether it belong'd to their Office to *Preach*, and to Administer the Ordinance of *Baptism* (though by the way, I think those who think it did, are very sparing of Proofs to support that Opinion) It is sufficient for my purpose that *the care of the Poor* was what they were principally appointed for. Now I believe in most of the Dissenting Congregations (especially the larger Ones) there are Persons appointed to manage that Affair; whereas amongst you, there is no such Officer as a *Deacon*, perhaps in one Parish of Twenty, and those who are Ordain'd such, though they *Preach* and *Baptize* (for they must not Administer the other Sacrament for a Reason which is yet a Secret,*¹) take no care at all of the Poor, so that as far as

* Sed cur Baptismi non Cana Administratio ei permittetur nulla satis idonea Ratio reddi potest. Divellunt Sacramenta qua cunjunxit Christus et predicationem

as I can see, though you retain the *Name*, there is more of the *Office of Deacons* amongst us, than there is in the Church of *England*.

Con. " But to return to your Complaint, *viz.* That " in the Church of *England* you are deprived of the " Liberty of chusing your Minister. — You know as " well as I, that your Ministers are commonly chosen " by the leading Persons in a Congregation. They " whose Fortunes will not allow them to contribute " much towards his Maintenance, are seldom consult- " ed in such Elections; yet their Souls are as valuable " as the Souls of those that have larger Purses. **

Non. I can't tell how much you know of the Dissenters Management (tho' by your way of talking, I am apt to think you are in a great Measure a Stranger to it) but this I can assure you, that in all those Elections of Ministers, which I have been acquainted with, not only all in Communion, but such as subscribe towards the Support of the Congregation, are summon'd to give their Attendance; and a Person that allows but five Shillings yearly, has as much a Vote, as his richer Neighbour, who gives five times that Sum: So that what you have quoted from your Author on this Head, is a Misrepresentation.

Con. Let this be how it will, If I was never so fully convinc'd that it was my right to chuse my Minister, " I would not be a *Dissenter*, unless I could meet with " better Arguments to prove that their Teachers have " a valid *Ordination*. **

Non. I thought I had sufficiently satisfied you about the Dissenters way of Ordaining Ministers, when I was with you last: Pray what have you to object against it?

Con. You mistake my Meaning. It is not the Manner of your Ordinations that I so much except against; however, since you have mention'd it again, I can't forbear taking Notice of something in your Account, which

*tione Verbi adjunxit, unumque altero ignobilius reddunt, cum Baptismum possit administrare Diaconus non sacram Canam. Alt. Damasc. Edit. ult. p. 672.
** Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 10. ** Ibid.*

which I never heard of before, *viz.* that the Persons ordain'd promise to maintain the *Unity* of the Church, against *Error* and *Schism*: "I wish with all my Soul" they may use their best Endeavours to make good "that Promise. But every Man must needs think its "very odd to engage a Man to promise to maintain "the *Unity* of the Church, who gets a *Maintenance* "by *Separation*. *

Non. I am very sorry that the Author whose Language you make Use of, had not at his first setting out, stated the Notion of *Church Unity*. If he had, a great Part of his Book might very well have been spared, and his Readers would not have been tired with an endless Repetition of a Set of Words which have no distinct Ideas affixed to them. Whatever he may think, its possible for a Man to *separate* from the Church of *England*, and yet have as great a Regard to *Unity*, as any of those who continue in her Communion: And I am well satisfied, the Dissenting Ministers do more to maintain it, than those who are perpetually talking on that Subject, and at the same time plead for the Continuance of those *unreasonable Impositions*, which by the Acknowledgement of some of the greatest Men among your selves, are the things which have divided us, and do so to this Day. And as to what your Friend talks of a *Maintenance*, I would not have you displeas'd if I tell him, that had he not had a Prospect of being better provided for in the Establishment, than he had while he continued a Nonconformist, the Dissenters would not have had such a doughty Antagonist to grapple with.

Con. Pray keep your Temper. I have another Objection against your Way of Ordaining, which I fancy you will not go over so easily. "You have some" of you *Imposition of Hands*, but the thing intend- "ed by it, *viz.* the *giving the Person Authority*, is "wholly omitted. The Senior Presbyter (at the Or- "dinations which I have been present at, does not (according

" (according to the Practice of our Church) say, *take thou Authority to preach the Word of God, &c.* or " any thing to that Purpose, which in my Opinion is " a gross Omission. **

Non. I don't know what Notion you have formed of Ordination; but, for my Part, I never thought that the *Ordainers* gave the *Power* to the Person whom they Ordain, for that I always supposed was derived from Christ, and his *Charter*; all that they can do is, to recognize the *Authority* which that *Charter* conveys; and you can understand no more than this by that Expression, *Take thou Authority to preach the Word of God*; unless (as a very learned Minister of ours observes) you suppose " some Clergyman's Hand to have some peculiar Virtue of Imprinting an *Indelible Character*, " that the Hands of others have not. Or, unless you set the *Ordainers* in the Place of Christ, and make them *Fountains* of Ecclesiastical *Power*, instead of being the meer *Instruments* or *Channels* of Conveyance.

Con. Well, we will let that Argument drop for the present. The principal thing insisted on in this Dispute is, that *Presbyters* have not the *Power* of *Ordination* vested in them; and I think my Friend has satisfactorily Answered all your Arguments on that Head.

Non. He may have Answered them, as far as I know to your satisfaction, and his own; but I do assure you he has left me as fully convinc'd of my being in the right, as I was before his Book made it's appearance in the World.

Con. I am afraid then that you are not as open to Conviction as you profess to be. Pray what do you think of your first Argument for *Presbyterian* Ordination, viz. the Promiscuous use of the names *Bishop*, and *Presbyter* in the New Testament?

Non. I think that your Friend has neither represented it fairly, nor said any thing that deserves to be call'd an Answer to it. You very well remember (and the world

** Lay-man's Pleas, &c. p. 12. * A clear Account of the Ancient Episcopacy, &c. p. 229.

world now knows it) that I did not argue altogether from the *Identity of Names*, but told you that the *Office* of the Bishop and *Presbyter* was the same likewise. This I produced a plain Text of Scripture for, (*viz.* 1 Pet. 5. 2.) and from thence concluded that, “if *Presbyters* perform’d those Duties in the Church which belong to the *Episcopal Office*, without doubt they were intrusted with the *Episcopal Power*.^{*} Now this part of my Argument, your Author has not thought fit to take any notice of, but goes on to advance things without so much as pretending to prove ‘em, as if his Readers were oblig’d to believe his bare Word, without asking a Reason for it. He must excuse me however, if I call upon him to make it appear by substantial Evidence, that the *Apostle* had any other *Successors* besides *Presbyters*, who were in the New Testament sometimes called *Bishops*; that *Timothy* was the *Settled Bishop* of *Ephesus*, and *Titus* of *Crete*, and that they stood in a *fixed Relation* to the Churches in these Places; that *Ignatius*’s Bishop was any more than the *Pastor* of a *single Congregation*, who had *Assistant Presbyters* under him, and that for the two first Centuries there was any thing like that *Diocesan Episcopacy* which we have now in the Church of *England*. These are some of the things which he would have credited as matters of fact, not to be so much as called in Question, but had he been at a little pains to establish the Belief of them; it would have been of vastly greater Service to his Cause than his childish jingle (to return him one of his own Complements†) of *Eldermen* and *Aldermen*, which, however it may please the fancies of some, will be thought very little to the purpose by such as are impartial Judges.

But while it is in my mind I must not omit to thank the Gentleman for one Concession, which he has been so kind as to make me, *viz.* that we have no perfect Form of Church Government mentioned in the New Testament;|| for if no Form is mentioned, then that of the

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* Lay-Nonconformity Justified 4 Edit. p. 10. † Layman’s Pleas &c. p. 7.
|| Ibid.

Church of *England* can no longer be said to be founded on a *jus Divinum*, but must be owned to be a Model of men's Devising. Indeed your Friend is pleased to say that there was no occasion to give an account of the Government of the Church in those Epistles which make mention of Church Officers.* But if *Dioecesan Episcopacy* be so *necessary*, that such as are without it, have no vaild Ministers, nor Sacraments, and the want of it renders their very Christianity precarious (as some charitable Church-men would perswade us it does,) I think we had reason to expect that this Form of Government should have been mentioned, and very fully and particularly too, but this not being done, I conclude that Notion wants a Foundation, and that the Gentlemen of this stamp talk *without Book*.

Con. Your second Argument to prove the Validity of *Presbyterian Ordination*, (*viz.* that in the first Ages of Christianity those they call *Bishops* were no other than the *Pastors* of particular Congregations, such as our *Incumbents* are, who have *Curates* and *Lecturers* to assist them) " is borrowed from Mr. *David Clarkson's* " Treatise of *Primitive Episcopacy*, and is excellently " confuted by Dr. *Maurice*." †

Non. It's no matter from whom the Argument was borrowed as long as it is a good one. If it has been confuted to your Author's hands, his reply to it would have been but a very little trouble to himself, and yet a Satisfaction to his Readers. But the Truth of the Matter is, this Argument has never been solidly Answered to this day; and until I see a late excellent Book (entitled, *A clear Account of the Ancient Episcopacy, &c.*) disproved, I believe it never will be.

Con. " But the Division of the World into *Dioeceses* " does not at all affect the case in debate. If there " were three several Orders in the Church, *viz.* *Bishops*, " *Presbyters*, and *Deacons*; then it matters not much, " how small or how large the *Dioeceses* were." *

Non.

* *Layman's Pleas, &c.* p. 13; + *Ibid.* p. 17. * *Ibid.* p. 18.

Non. Could your Friend prove that there was these three distinct Orders in the Church, he would have gain'd a Point which his Brethren have been (tho' to very little purpose) long contending for. But yet I can't be of his mind, that it matters not much how small or how large the *Dioceſes* were; and unless he can make me sensible, that a Bishop can as well take the Pastoral care of a *Dioceſs* which has, it may be, several *Hundred Thousand* Souls in it, as he can of one *single* Congregation, we shall never agree in our Opinions. Besides, if the Primitive Bishops had the Charge but of one Congregation, (which is evident enough from *Ignatius* himself†) then *Dioceſan* Episcopacy (such I mean as your Author is an Advocate for) is not only inconsistent with, but destructive of that which was of Divine Appointment; and therefore whatever he thinks, the extent of the Bishops charge is a great thing in Controversy.

Con. Come, we must not insist so long on one Head, because we have a great many things to talk over before we part. I have admired, since I saw you last, why you should lay so great a stress upon *Timothy's* being Ordain'd by the laying on of the hands of the *Presbytery*, when "it is more than probable, that he was ordain'd to the Office of a Bishop by the hands of St. Paul."||

Non. I don't think I lay a greater stress on that Argument than it will really bear. The fancy that *Timothy* was ordain'd by the laying on of the hands of St. Paul, seems perfectly groundless, so far is it I think from being more than probable. The learned Dr. *Whitby*, tells you that the *χειροτόνεια* or Gift mentioned in the place your Author refers to, (viz. 2 Tim. 1. 6.) was the Gift of the Holy Ghost conferred only in those times by the hands of an Apostle, and now wholly ceased.* But to enquire into this matter a little more particularly. Your Friend says its *more than probable* (i. e.

† Ἐπιστολὴ τῷ φίλιῳ οὐκέτι σώματος ἀλλὰ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ καὶ διακόνοις τῷ
εὐδιάλογοι μη. Epist. ad Philadelp. || Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 19. ¶ Vid.
Dr. *Whitby* in loc.

it is certain) that *Timothy* was ordain'd to the Office of a Bishop by the laying on of the hands of St. *Paul*, by which he means either that St. *Paul* ordain'd him alone; or in Conjunction with other *Apostles*, or else that *Presbyters* join'd with him in that Solemnity. If he means that St. *Paul* ordain'd *Timothy* alone, it will be expected that he produce some places of Scripture where a single Apostle is called a *Presbytery*. If he says that other *Apostles* concurr'd with him in this Action, he must prove that there were several of these extraordinary Officers present on that occasion, and concern'd in *Timothy's* Investiture; which I fancy is a Task he will not be very fond of undertaking, because I believe he has no hopes of succeeding in it if he did. Should it be said that *Presbyters* join'd with St. *Paul* in the Ordination we are speaking of, I can't see but that this is a sufficient Evidence that they had a power of Ordination lodg'd in them; because (as the learned *Stillingfleet* observes) "If the *Presbytery* had nothing to do in the Ordination, to what purpose were their hands laid upon him? Was it only to be witnesses of the Fact or to signify their consent, both these might have been done without their use of that Ceremony, which will scarce be instanc'd in to be done by any but such as had power to confer what was signified by that Ceremony."† Your Author I know infinuates *Timothy's* having a Jurisdiction over other *Presbyters*, and (if I understand him right) seems to conclude from thence that he could not be Ordain'd by them; but how does this appear to be a good consequence? In the Church of *England*, *Bishops* consecrate an *Arch-bishop*, and why might not *Presbyters* ordain an *Evangelist*?

Con. I acknowledge your defence of this Argument, seems a little plausible, but I fancy your next, (viz. that the Ends of Ordination are as effectually answered where *Senior Presbyters*, Ordain as where *Dioceſan Bishops* are the Persons who officiate) has no weight at all

all in it. "The Ends of Ordination mentioned by
"your Author, may be as effectually answered with-
"out any Ordination at all, provided that a number
"of Persons agree to make Choice of a Man to be
"their Pastor, &c."*

Non. If you remember when I mentioned this Argument, from the learned Dr. Calamy, I told you that, when taken with others, I thought it a very good one, and I must own I think so still. That the *Ends* of Ordination may as well be answered without any Ordination at all, I fancy your Friend should have been very cautious of asserting; because it can't be supposed that the *Apostles* would have appointed any Custom in the Church without proposing some valuable End in it, and to say the contrary is not only to reflect on those excellent Persons who laid the Foundations of the Church, but on the Holy Ghost too, by whom they were inspired, and under whose Conduct and Direction they acted in this as well as in the other cases, I allow what he says that the Members of a Society "can re-commend the Teacher they have made Choice of, "to the Divine Assistance, and heartily beg of God "to enable him to discharge his Duty."† And in cases of necessity I make no scruple to own that a Person approv'd and chosen may act as a Minister, and expect that God will own him as such; but, generally speaking, the People can't be thought competent Judges of Men's Qualifications for such a station in the Church; they may indeed know what sort of Preaching, &c. is most to their own Edification, yet their Approbation of a Person, without a regular Investiture into his Office, can't be supposed to procure him such a measure of Respect as is necessary to his being useful in any other part of the Church, where the Providence of God may afterwards call him; and if the matter should be put on that foot, the Office of the Ministry might easily be usurp'd by any one, that had a competent number of Friends, and Confidence enough to think

think himself qualified to support such a Character, a wide door would be opened to illiterate Intruders, the sacred Function soon grow contemptible, and there would be no such thing as *Order* kept up in the Churches. But these Evils are as well remedied where *Presbyters* as where *Dioceſan* Bishops are the Ordainers : I think therefore this Argument has more in it than your Friend would make the world believe it has ; and so has my next ; taken from the remarkable *Succesſ* which has by the Blessing of God, attended the *Difſen-ters* Ministry.

Con. “ If this Argument proves any thing at all, “ it is more than you are willing it should, and enough “ to destroy what you hear make use of it for to Esta-“ blifh. I am well assured that the *Quakers* who have “ no *Order* at all, will tell you that God has remark-“ ably *blessed* their Preaching both at home and a-“ broad to be the means of Converting a multitude of “ Souls ; and I know not why I should believe you, “ and give no Credit to them. I desire you to con-“ sider how many Congregations are supply’d by *Can-*“ *didates* very often for a considerable time ; now if “ the Preaching and Praying of such Persons be Edify-“ ing before they are ordain’d to any Office in the “ Church, according to your way of Reasoning, this “ is an Argument to prove that they are true Ministers “ of Christ.”*

Non. After all that you have said, I can be in no great pain about the Validity of this Argument, because St. Paul himself made use of it ; which I am satisfy’d he would never have done had it been an inconclusive one. *Ye are our Epistle* (says he to the *Corinthians*) *written in our Hearts, kn̄wn and read of all men; for as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ ministred by us, written not with Ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, &c.* 2 Cor. 3. 2, 3. i. e. (as a great Commentator of your own paraphrases the Words.) “ The Works of “ Conversion which we have wrought among you, of “ which

" which our own Conscience gives us Testimony, will
 " serve us abundantly instead of *Letters Commendatory*
 " from you to all others, who cannot but have heard
 " the Fame of it. And you (that is your *Faith*) are
 " most conspicuously an Epistle of Christ, and by this
 " Epistle, this Testimony, Christ, that great Bishop of
 " our Souls, doth recommend us to all Men. †" Much like
 this is that which we have, *I Cor. 9. 2. The Seal of mine
 Apostleship, are ye in the Lord, q. d.* " Your Conversion
 " to the Faith is as great a Confirmation of my Apostles-
 " ship as a Seal is to an Indenture or Instrument, or
 " particularly to the *Letters Dimissory*, by which Mes-
 " sengers were wont to be sent to the Churches ||." Now,
 either this is the Sense of these Texts or it is
 not? If you think it is not, I desire that you or your
 Friend would give another, and then we will talk fur-
 ther of this Matter. If it be, then the Argument is
 St. Paul's, and let your Author enter the Lists with that
 inspired Writer as soon as he pleases; but I would have
 him consider, what is like to be the Issue of so unequal
 a Combat. And now I can't see what occasion there is
 for my saying any more on this Head; however before
 I dismiss it, give me leave to tell you, that I never
 thought it sufficient for such as set up for Teachers, to
 tell the World that they have been instrumental for the
 Conversion of a great many Souls; for unless it appears
 by good Evidences that God has really owned them and
 their Labours, for the promoting of real and vital Reli-
 gion, and gaining Men to the Love and Practice of
 Holiness, they have no Right to urge this Argument
 of Success in Vindication of their Ministry. As to our
 Candidates: If God has inclin'd their Hearts to devote
 themselves to the service of the Church, qualified
 them for, and Bless'd them in their work, it is, with
 me, beyond Question, that such are *in foro Dei* true
 Ministers of Christ, tho' *in foro Ecclesiae* they are not
 regularly so, until solemnly invested into their Office
 by

† Vid. Dr. Hammond in loc. || Ibid. in loc.

by Ordination. And now if you please we will proceed to my next Argument, *viz.*

That upon your Principle, no Clergy-man in *England* can pretend to prove the Validity of his own Orders, because, " to do this, he must be assured, that " the Person who ordain'd him was ordain'd by a Bishop, and the same of that Bishop, and thus must " he run the matter back as far as the *Apostles* days, " and if he can't make out an *uninterrupted Succession*, " he is neither able to satisfy himself, nor Hearers of " his being an authorized Minister of Christ*.

Con. " Your Argument is so very weak, that I am " apt to think, you don't believe it affects the Controversy. If an *uninterrupted Succession* and a perfect " Knowledge of that Succession are things so necessary, " I dare affirm, that none of the Teachers (allowing " their Ordinations valid) can prove, that they have " a true Mission. For he, that attempts to prove this, " must prove that the Person who ordain'd him was " ordain'd by *Presbyters*, and so of those *Presbyters* " quite back to the *Apostles* days, for if it is necessary " for the one, it is equally necessary for the other †.

Nan. Though you have been at the pains to repeat what your Author has offered on the afore-mentioned Head, I can't so much undervalue your judgment, as to think that you really believe, what he has said to be an Answer to my Argument. If you mind it, that which I disputed against was, the *Necessity* of *Episcopal Ordination*, which is, you know, on all occasions strenuously contended for by the most of your Writers, who have engaged in this Controversy. Now I say, according to this Hypothesis, If the *Succession* of *Bishops* has been ever *Interrupted* (and the Right Reverend *Bishop* of *Bangor* tells us, that this is more than probable upon all *Historical Evidence* ‡, the contrary being a Point of which the most learned must have the least Assurance, and the unlearned can have no Notion but through Ignorance and Credulity **) then the next *Bishop* after such

* Lay-Nonconformity Justified, 4 Edit. p. 12. † Lay-man's Pleas answered, p. 21, 22. ‡ Preservative, &c; ¶ Answer to the Representation, &c, p. 91.

such an *Interruption*, could have no other than a *Presbyterian* or *Lay-Ordination*, which, according to you, could not be a *valid* one, and consequently, all the Orders given by such a Person must be null of course. Your Author indeed says, that the case of *our Ministers* is the same with *yours*; but who does not see a very apparent Difference? Indeed if the *Dissenters* went upon the same bottom you do, they would have the same difficulty to struggle with that you have; but seeing they never urge an *uninterrupted Succession of Presbyters*, to prove the validity of their Ordination; you can't charge them with any of those Absurdities, which such a Notion draws after it; for they disown the *Premises*, and therefore are not responsible for the *Conclusion*.

Con. There may be, as far as I know, something in what you offer, but if one of *our Ministers* and one of *yours*, were to prove their Mission from a *Succession* of Persons *regularly ordain'd*, "in such a Search a Clergy-man would have vastly the Advantage — If one of your Teachers was to attempt to prove the Succession of *Presbyters*, and the Validity of his Orders that way, he would be quite lost as soon as he got to the late *Civil Wars*, and very likely, instead of meeting with a *Presbyter*, would meet with a *Captain of Horse*, or some Military Man giving a Commission to use the Sword of the Spirit. In short, my Friend thinks, there's nothing in this Argument that deserves any other Answer*.

Non. I told you just now, that the *Dissenters* never stake the Validity of their Ordination on an *uninterrupted Succession*; and yet if they did, I can't see that your Clergy would have so much the advantage of them as you fancy. For suppose there was any Truth in what your Author says, that one of *our Ministers* attempting to make out a Succession of *Presbyters*, should be lost as soon as he got to the late *Civil War*, and meet with a *Captain of Horse*, instead of a *Presbyter*. It is but for those who pretend to prove a Succession

sion of, what they call, a superiour sort of Officers to trace the matter a little farther back, (for I don't think a few Years should make any great difference between Neighbours) and they would meet perhaps, with an *Heretical, Blasphemous and abominably wicked Pope*, an *Enemy to God and all Religion*. If there is nothing in my Argument, that deserves any other Answer, I think there's nothing in the Answer, that deserves any other Reply: So that on this Article, I fancy we are even.

Cn. And do you think you shall be so on the next too, I mean, when you would make the World believe, that because some of our Divines have received the Sacrament from the hands of *Presbyterian Ministers*, therefore others ought to do so likewise? " If I should " undertake to prove, that your Teachers (and by " consequence their Hearers) are obliged to receive " the Sacrament in the Church of *England*, and use " this Argument to make good this Assertion, *viz.* " that Mr. *Baxter*, Dr. *Bates*, &c. have received the " Sacrament in the Church; you will be apt to Re- " ply, they might do as they thought fit, but I am not " to have my judgment guided by their Practice.*

Non. Whether it be owing to your Friends weak-
ness, or a quality far more culpable, that he has mis-
understood and misrepresented my Argument is left to
his own Consideration; but that he has done so, you
your self must be sensible of. When I told you, that
some of your own Bishops, and Clergy had join'd in
Communion with *Presbyterian* Congregations, while
they lived abroad in other Countries, I did not from
thence conclude, (as is groundlessly insinuated) that
therefore others are obliged to do so; but that such of
your Divines did thereby virtually own the Ordinac-
tions I am pleading for, and apprehend that the Min-
isters with whom they thus held Communion, had a
call and warrant from God to officiate as Pastors in the
Church, and that a Divine Blessing would attend
them and their Ministriations; this I thought to be a
fair

fair Consequence, and the rather, because it is supported by another Thing, which I likewise offered to you the last time, tho' my *Examiner* has hardly taken notice of it, viz. The Admission of *Dissenters* to the *Lord's Supper*, without being *Re-baptized*, which I believe there is scarce a Clergy-man in *England*, who makes a scruple of. For either these Gentlemen think the *Dissenters* *Baptism* to be *valid*, or they do not? If they do not, they act a very preposterous Part in allowing them to partake of the *confirming Ordinance* of the *Christian Religion*, before they have been *initiated* into that Religion. If they do think their *Baptism* valid, they must allow them to be *valid Ministers*, or else say, that the *Laity* have an *Authority* to *Baptize*, (ay and to administer the other *Sacrament* too for I could never yet see, why a Person should not do both as well as one) which is fairly giving up their own *Order*. And according to this *Latitudinarian Principle* (to use your Author's own Expression) that *infamous Book the Rights may come to be the truest and best account of Church Government*.* Thus I think there are very plain *Inconsistencies* in the *Principles* and *Practices* of those who disown *Presbyterian Ordination*; but I find they themselves must endeavour to reconcile them as well as they can, your Friend having declared, that he has no *design to vindicate them*.† I confess, when I read this at first, I thought it did not look extremely kind; however it's hoped his Brethren, will not be angry with such an Advocate, for I have the Charity to believe that the Gentleman's not appearing in their Defence on this Head, as well as others, arises rather from a want of *Ability* than *Inclination*, and it will be generous in such cases to accept the *Will for the Deed*. But we must go on.

If you recollect your self you may mind I told you, "I dared not be so uncharitable as to Unchurch all the "foreign Protestants, which I apprehend is the conse- "quence of denying the Validity of *Presbyterian Or-*
" "dination, for it's plain, their Ministers never had

* *Layman's Pleas, &c.* p. 6. † *Ibid.* p. 22.

any other.|| This consideration I assure you goes a great way with me in the Controversy before us.

Con. You dare not Unchurch all the *foreign* Protestants! " And dare you at the same time run counter " to the *whole Christian World* which is generally Epis- " copal. I desire you to produce an Instance of any " one Christian Church that was not governed by Bi- " shops *distinct*, from and *Superior* to Presbyters till " within two hundred Years last past, till the *Vaudois* " in *Piedmont*, the *Hugonots* in *France*, the *Calvinists* " in *Geneva*, and the *Presbyterians* thence translated " into *Holland*, *Scotland* and *England*.*

Non. The *whole Christian world* generally Episcopal! Fray Sir, can you tell what your Friend means by *generally* here? if he means *universally* (as I believe he does from his saying soon after, that the *Catholick Church* *all over the World*, is *all* Episcopal) he is guilty of a *Tautology*, and has press'd a very unnecessary Word into his service. But this is but a small fault when compared with his Uncharitableness in declaring all those to be without the pale of the Christian Church, who have not receiyed the *Prelatical Form of Church Government*, and at the same time (a misfor- tune which commonly attends some Writers) *contra- dicting* himself by allowing the *Vaudois* in *Piedmont*, &c. to be Christian Churches. If by *generally* he means only for the *most part*, I leave it to his second thoughts, whether to say that the *whole Christian World* is *partly* Episcopal, be a way of speaking proper enough for one who has taken upon him the Character of a *Censor*. But the Gentleman must be excused, for his thoughts were so much engaged in the Examination of my Argument, that he had not time to consider his own; and if he happens now and then to talk inconsistently, there's no doubt but his Friends will make him all the reasonable Allowances he has occasion for.

Con. Well, but can you produce an Instance of any one Christian Church, that was not governed by Bi- shops

|| Lay Nonconformity Justified, p. 12. ? Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 23.

shops distinct, from and superior to Presbyters till within two hundred Years last past?

N.n. Your own learned Dr. Stillingfleet tells you, "if we may believe the great Antiquaries of the Church of Scotland, that Church was Governed by their Culdei as they called their Presbyters, without any Bishop over them, for a long time. *Johannes Major* speaks of their Instruction in the Faith. *Per Sacerdotes & Monachos sine Episcopis Scotti in fide eruditissimi*. But (says our Author) left that should be interpreted only of their Conversion. *Johannes Fordonus* is clear and full as to their Government from the time of their Conversion about A.D. 263. to the coming of *Palladius*, A.D. 430. that they were only governed by Presbyters and Monks. *Ante Palladii adventum habebant Scotti fidei Doctores ac Sacramentorum Administratores Presbyteros solummodo vel Monachos ritum sequentes Ecclesiae Primitiva.*"* The same great man mentions likewise the Gothick Churches, which he says, if we believe *Philostorgius* were planted and governed by Presbyters for above Seventy Years. But I see no necessity that there is of my mentioning any more particular Instances, when it is most evident that for the two first Centuries there was no such thing as *Dioceſan Episcopacy* in any of the Churches.

And now methinks I can't without some Resentment take notice of your Friend's saying, that the *Vaudois* in Piedmont, the *Hugonots* in France, &c. "when compared with the Churches under the Popes Supremacy and *Episcopal*, are only like a wart on the face of the western Church"† Does he not know with what an unshaken Constancy, those he speaks so contemptibly of, have adhered to the Reformation? Has he never read what Persecutions they have gone through, to what Hardships and Miseries they have been exposed for the sake of their Religion, and how many Thousands of them have attested the Truth of it with their Blood?

* *Irenicum*, 374, 375. † *Layman's Pleas*, &c. p. 23.

Blood? And must these glorious *Confessors* be mentioned with so much contempt and compared to an *Excrecence a blemish* on the Face of the Church! Sure had I been in your Friend's case, whatever my thoughts were, I should have been silent on this Head, and I fancy, tho' in the opinion of some he may pass for never the worse *Church-man*, there are others who won't think him the better *Protestant*, for making use of such an Expression, and admiring the Ingenuity of it.

Con. But, "to examine your Argument a little closer, I hope you don't pretend that your case is parallel to that of those *foreign Protestants* which you are so much concern'd for; several of them have declared that they approve of and admire our Constitution, and wish that they had the same kind of Church Government. They condemn your Separation, as you may see in their Letters printed in the latter End of Bishop Stillingfleet's *Unreasonableſſeſs of Separation.*"*

Non. What you now offer has been Answered so many Times already, that I can't but wonder your Author would give me the trouble of Replying to it. You have been told by several of our Writers (and none of yours, have been able to disprove it) that the *foreign Protestants* in their *Confessions of Faith*, assert the *Identity* of *Bishops* and *Presbyters*; that they have never so much as once attempted to introduce *Dioceſan Episcopacy*, (which one would think they should have done long before now, had they admired your Constitution, and wish'd for the same sort of Church Government) that you can't produce the *Declaration of any Protestant Synod or University* which says that *Presbyterian Ordination is Null and Invalid*,† that our Principles have been sadly misrepresented to the foreign Divines to induce them to give Judgment against us, and to declare in favour of *Episcopacy* and *Ceremonies*. And as for the *Letters* which have been so often talk'd of,

* *Layman's Pleas, &c.* p. 24. † *Wither's Truth Try'd, &c.* part 1. p. 75.

of, tho' there are several respectful Things said in them of the Church and Bishops, I can't find that they condemn Ordination by Presbyters; so far from that, (as a learned Man observes) there is just ground to think, that if the foreign *Protestants* " were made Umpires " between the two Parties, *Prelatical* and *Presbyterian*, " and heard the true State of our Debate, and true " matters of Fact, they would be of the same mind " with us.*

Con. I perceive you are very fond of believing, that the foreign *Protestants* are favourers of your Ministry; and, I must confess, I can't but think that they are so, because it is the same with their own. But I wonder, you should fancy that one of the *Articles* of the Church (*viz.* the 23d) countenances your Ordinations. In my opinion, my Friend has said enough to convince you of this mistake; and I hope you will no longer please your selves with an Imagination, which is so perfectly groundless.

Non. What I said with regard to the *Article* you speak of, you know was supported by the Sentiment of the late excellent Bishop of *Sarum*, whose Judgment in some other cases, your Friend seems to have a great value for, and who undoubtedly understood the Articles of the Church of *England* better than either of us. Your Author I know tells his Readers, " That there " were three distinct Orders of the Church, Bishops, " Priests and Deacons, that Bishops had all along the " Power of Ordaining, and that it is the safest way to " judge, in what Sense that Article is to be under- " stood, by considering what was the Opinion and " Practice of the Primitive Church, &c. and that it " is certainly to be taken in a Sense agreeable to the " Practice of Antiquity. But this is a pitiful beg- " ging of the Question, that I am persuaded it will be no Disappointment to any Person besides himself, if I take no farther notice of it.

And now I reckon, we have almost done with the Head of Ordination. There is, however one thing more,

more, which I remember I mentioned to you at our last Conference, and which I told you was a trouble to me; and that is your allowing the Validity of Orders given by *Popish* Bishops, whereas *Protestant Dissenters* are not admitted to officiate in the Church, unless they will submit to a Re-Ordination.

Con. " Tho' *Idolatry*, and the *Usurpation* of the " *Pope*, are Reasons sufficient to separate from the *Ro-*
" *mish* Church, yet they do not so far, *unchurch* a
" *Church of Christ*; but that a Person, upon true Re-
" pentance, may be received as a true Minister, with-
" out being re-ordin'd. ---- The *Romish* " Bishops
" have not forfeited their Authority, tho' they have
" grossly abused it.

Non. I perceive your Friend can be very charitable, when his Inclination leads him to it. I don't know whence it arises; but the poor *Dissenters*, and the *Protestant* Churches abroad are, in his Opinion, no parts of the Catholick Church, (tho' as I observed before, in Contradiction to himself he once owns them to be so) and that because they are not Episcopal. But the *Romish* Church is readily allowed to be a *Church of Christ*; so that the Gentlemen of that Communion are more in his good graces, than we are. Well, let him by all means enjoy his own Opinion; but for my part, if I really thought the *Dissenter's* Ordination an Irregularity, I could with much greater Satisfaction wait on their Ministry, than I could on a Person's, who was once a *Mass Priest* " ordain'd (as Mr. Baxter says) to " make his Maker, and to give Christ's real Flesh with " his Hands to the People, and to preach the unsound " Doctrines of their Church, which seem to be essential " Parts of his Function.* This notorious Corruption, as also the Character of *Popish* Ordainers, and the Head from which they own their Authority to be derived, would raise in my mind infinitely greater Scruples, than a Defect (supposing that to be the case) in the formality of a Minister's Investiture, and I am very confident, there are thousands of your own Church, who are of my mind. Thus

Thus I think I have defended my Arguments for *Presbyterian* Ordination, against every thing that your Friend has offered to invalidate them. As for his general Remark with which he concludes this part of the Debate, it is express'd with all imaginable Assurance, but there is nothing that looks like Proof to support and establish it. It is an easy matter to tell the World, " That the *Fathers*, where-ever they " speak of the Government of the Church, speak of " three distinct Orders, *viz.* *Bishops*, *Presbyters* and " *Deacons*; the highest of which Orders had always " the Power of Ordination; and that this *Episcopal* " Government, they constantly affirm was derived " from the Apostles, &c. * These are Things which sound big; and where there is a good degree of Credulity, your Author's Word may be rely'd on; but with the best sort of Readers, who can distinguish between Assertion and Argument, such a way of talking will go for just nothing.

Con. Will you hear me a word or two more before we proceed? You seem to be very loath to own our Form of Church-Government, " and yet within less " than one Century after the Days of the Apostles, " we do plainly see that this was the Constitution " even of those Churches, that had been gathered " and settled by the Apostles themselves. If this does " not prove *Episcopacy* to be of Apostolical Institution, " I know not what will satisfy you. †

Non. You have heard me several times deny (and I do it again) that there was any thing like your form of Church Government within less than one Century, after the Days of the Apostles; tho' if it had been so, I can't see how this would prove it to be of Apostolical Institution; unless you think, that in their Lifetime they gave Directions, that about a Hundred Years after they were dead, the Churches they had gathered should receive this form of Government, or that they came out of their Graves, after they had slept there for some scores of Years, and settled the Constitution we are talking of.

G

Con.

Con. I am afraid you are obstinate, and that I discourse with you to very little purpose; but if you will give me leave, " I'll now mention the Account, which " a Gentleman of Note, a Teacher of yours, gives of " this matter.*

Non. If you mean Mr. Peirce's Account of the Government of the Church by *Presbyters*, and how the Senior *Presbyter* in a Congregation, in some time, appropriated to himself the name of *Bishop*, and left that of *Presbyter* to his Brethren, &c. Tho' I am satisfied, what that learned Author has advanced on that Head is matter of Fact, yet this at present is none of my concern, because I propose no more than a Vindication of my own Arguments. If your Friend has any thing to say to the Gentleman we are speaking of, I believe he will find, that he has advanc'd nothing, but what he can give very good Reasons for, and I am very confident, those of your Writers who have had a trial of his Abilities are very sensible, that he has no occasion for a second in this Controversy.

Con. But if you please, hear me a word or two, as to that Matter; I have thought of what Mr. Peirce has said on that Subject, but I could never persuade my self, that the worthy *Presbyters* of the Primitive Church, should appropriate to themselves the Title of *Bishops*, if they had not thought that according to the Apostolical Settlement, their Office was distinct from, and superior to that of their Assistant *Presbyters*. " It " is certainly very surprizing, that in an Age of such " singular Simplicity, and when there were no Mo- " tives, but what Labour and Sufferings could suggest, " Men should affect the *preheminence*. †

Non. I can't think that there is any thing so very surprizing, in what you have taken Notice of; you know very well, that the Nature of Men is miserably corrupted, and that the most shining Christians upon Earth have their blemishes. There was a Strife amongst the Apostles themselves, *which of them should be accounted the greatest*, Luke 22.24. and after such

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an Instance as that is, how can it be a Wonder to you, that such as came after them should affect a superiority?

Con. "But it is very unfortunate that our Advocates "for Presbytery, after they have given us such a grave "Account of so notable an Alteration, are not able "to tell us at what time this Usurpation began."†

Non. Seeing your Author is now disputing against Mr. *Peirce*, whose notion he had just before taken notice of, I can't Reply to what you last mention'd to better purpose than in that Gentleman's own Words, he having already Answered the Objection to my hands. For speaking to Dr. *Wells*, (who had urg'd the same) says he,|| "I must put you in mind of one of "your unlucky Remarks, that this is just like the *Pa-*"
pists way of disputing. Thus says the *Jesuit* " (whose Challenge Bishop *Usher* answers) your Doctors "and Masters grant that the Church of *Rome* for 400 "or 500 Years after Christ did hold the true Religion. "First then I would fain know what Bishop of *Rome* "did alter that Religion? In what *Pope's* Days was "the true Religion overthrown in *Rome*? I believe "it would be hard for you to tell when the Papal "Usupations began precisely: And therefore I may "well use the Bishops words in Answer to you---The "Original of Errors is often Times so obscure, and "their Breed so base, that howsoever it might be ob- "served by those who lived in the same Age, yet no "wise Man will marvel, if in tract of Time the *Re-*"
ginnings of many of them should be forgotten, and "no Register of the time of their Birth found "extant.

Con. I wish you could stay long enough with me to give me an Opportunity of Replying, but I am afraid you will be for going in a little while, and therefore I would come to those Things which you have particularly excepted against in the Church of *England*; and yet before I do this, I can't forbear telling you, "that "every Man is obliged to do all that in him lies, to

† Ibid. || Mr. *Peirce's* Eighth Letter to Dr. *Wells*. p. 20,

" promote the Peace and Unity of the Church of
 " Christ, and of that particular Church where he lives.
 " And nothing but the imposing of *Sinful Terms*, and
 " requiring us to bear a Part in them, will justify Sepa-
 " ration."*

Non. That every Man is oblig'd to do his utmost to promote the Peace and Unity of the Church of Christ, I readily agree to; but that nothing but the imposing *Sinful Terms* will justify Separation, is what I can't be satisfied in, and unless you can prove it to be my Duty to sit under an *ignorant, careless* and an *unqualified* Minister, when there is another within my Reach of a better Character, your Friend and I shall be of two minds; for I think, in that Case, I may withdraw from one Society, and join with another, supposing that there were no *unlawful Terms* of Communion required of me. Besides, though the Terms of Communion in any particular Church are really lawful, yet if (after my most serious Consideration, and best Enquiry) I should not apprehend them to be so, there's no doubt but my Separation would be justifiable. The Right Reverend Bishop of *Bangor*, speaking on this Head, says, " If there be Persons who will be persuaded by no Arguments that a Compliance with these Terms (*viz.* which are enjoyn'd by the Church of *England*) is in it self lawful, I confess it is my Opinion, that while they are thus persuaded, it is as much their Duty to separate from us, as it is our Duty to separate from the Church of *Rome*. For they, as well as we, are obliged not to do what they judge to be unlawful, and they, as much as we, ought to assemble themselves for the Worship of God and the Enjoyment of his Ordinances. *

Con. You are on all Occasions, I find, talking of *Conscience* and *Persuasion*, but I am of my Friend's Mind, that *unless* you can prove, that those Things which you scruple are forbidden by the *Word of God*, it can't be said, that *Conscience* is one Jot concerned in the Matter. **

N.z.

* Layman's Pleas, &c. p 28. * Reasonableness of Conformity, 2. Edit.
 138. ** Lay-man's Pleas, &c. p. 28

Non. Suppose after I have taken all the care I can, to get my self rightly inform'd, I should think any particular thing to be contrary to the Word of God, though I may be really mistaken in my Apprehension concerning it, ought I not in Conscience to avoid that thing? Without all doubt I ought, for (as an Author of your own has observed) "no Man can in any case Act against his Judgment but he is guilty of Sin in so doing;"* yea, if I happen to have but a settled *Doubt* upon my mind concerning any Action, as long as that *Doubt* continues, if I should venture upon it notwithstanding I can't see how such a conduct would be Justified. This seems to me plain enough from the words of the Apostle, Rom. 14. 23. *He that doubteth is Damned, if he Eat, because he Eateth not of Faith, because whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin.* A Persuasion then of the *Unlawfulness* of any of your Terms of Communion or an *Unconquerable Scruple* concerning them, would be a sufficient Reason for my Non-compliyance and should I conform on these Terms, to be sure I should Sin against my Conscience, tho' I could not prove that the Word of God had forbidden them.

Con. But "if those who have such doubts and Scruples about indifferent things would only read what has been said by the Old *Nonconformists* concerning the necessity of Submission to the Rulers of the Church, in such cases their Doubts and Scruples would be all removed."†

Non. I must confess *Submission* to the *Rulers* of the Church is the *Easiest* and surest Way of resolving *Doubts*, and if it did not put out our *Eyes*, and I could any way reconcile it to *Thought*, or *Choice*, or *Sincerity*, or any thing like it, I should be well enough pleas'd with the *Expedient*, but when the *Doctrine* of the *necessity* of such a *Submission*, as some are now contending for, has been proved to a *Demonstration*, || to be a Violation

* Abridgment of the *London Cases*, p. 237. † *Lay-man's Pleas, &c.* p. 29. || Answer to the Representation, &c. By the Right Reverend Bishop of Bangor.

Violation of the Rights of human Nature, and contradictory to the fundamental Principles of the *Reformation*, your Friend will have a hard Matter to bring me to entertain a good Opinion of it, and I can't but be angry with him that he should mention the *old Nonconformists* when he is talking on this Head, and endeavour to make the World believe that they were Favourers of such a Notion.

Con. " Since the *Modes* and *Circumstances* of divine Worship, are not determined by the Laws of God, it is beyond dispute that there is a Power left in the Hands of the *Governours* of the Church to appoint such Rules and such Forms for the solemn Acts of Worship, as they in their prudence think have a tendency to promote *Decency, Order* and *Edification*.*

Non. If there be such a Power left in the Hands of the *Governours* of the Church as your Friend speaks of, what Pretence could the first *Reformers* have for leaving the Communion of the Church of *Rome*? There's no doubt but that the Persons who had the Ecclesiastical Power in their Hands at that time thought that those *Rules* and *Forms* which they had appointed for the solemn Acts of Worship, had a tendency to promote *Decency, Order* and *Edification*, and consequently according to the Notion now advanced, the appointing of such Rules and Forms was what they had a Warrant for, and therefore a Separation from their Church was unjustifiable.

Con. You carry the Matter much farther than my Friend design'd it. When he speaks of the Power of Church *Governours*, you must not suppose him to extend it any farther than this, that " unless their Determinations are contrary to the Word of God they ought to be submitted to by all private Christians. †

Non. But, good Sir, who must judge whether the Determinations of Church *Governours* are contrary to the Word of God or not? If *Governours* must be the Judges, to be sure they will give an Opinion in their own

* *Layman's Pleas*, &c. p. 30. † *Ibid.*

own Favour, and indeed on this Principle the Reformation would be condemn'd and all the Promoters of it. But if the *People* are to judge in the Case before us, the Argument is against you, and what your Friend has been urging is nothing to the purpose. Besides, supposing there was such a *Power* lodg'd in the *Governours* of the Church, as you have been pleading for; at present (as I told you the last time) there is no Law which requires our Conformity to the Church of *England*, the Act of *Toleration* having granted us a Liberty of worshipping God according to the dictates of our own Consciences.

Con. "I hope you will not be offended, if I affirm
"that the Act of *Uniformity* is not yet repeal'd, nor
"any one Act that obliges you to conform to the
"Church of *England*; and consequently you are as
"much obliged as ever to hold Communion with that
"Church."*

Non. I can tell you that the excellent Bishop of *Bangor* is of another Opinion; having told the World that "the Act of *Uniformity* (which is to be consider-
"ed in its present condition together with the Act of
"*Toleration*) does not oblige any to *Conformity* but
"those whose Consciences approve of it,"† And unless your Author can shew me how we can be said to be oblig'd by Authority, to hold Communion with the Church of *England*, when that same Authority has declared, that it shall be left entirely to our own Liberty, whether we will do so or not; I must believe that the learned Prelate before mentioned is in the Right.

Con: "But suppose there was no human Law that
"required you to conform to the Church of *England*,
"the Laws of our Holy Religion oblige you to do all
"that lies in your Power to promote the *Peace* and *Uni-
"ty* of the Church in general."*

Non. I am as sensible of this as you, or your Friend can be; but when you come to conclude from my Obligation

* *Lay-man's Pleas, &c.* p. 30. † *Answer to the Representation, &c.*
267. † *Ibid* p. 36

ligation to promote *Peace* and *Unity*, that I am bound to continue in Communion with a Church, which imposes Terms on it's Members, never so much as mentioned by Christ and his Apostles, and a compliance with which would be against my Judgment and Conscience, here I must leave you. What your Author says in the Paragraph, which your last Quotation was a part of, about proving your Terms of Communion to be sinful, was answered but just now, and there's no need of saying the same Things over again.

Con. When we were talking but now, of the Power of the Governours of the Church, to determine the Modes and Circumstances of Divine Worship, I omitted to mention one Thing, which my Friend has taken notice of, and because I think it very material, give me leave to offer it to you now. And it is this, *viz.* There have been several Things of Divine Institution, as the posture of *standing* at the *Passover* under the *Old Testament*, and in the *New*, the Use of *Deaconesses* in the Church, the *Love-feasts* before the *Eucharist*, &c. which by the Authority of the Church were entirely lain aside; and "certainly a greater degree of Authority is necessary to take away a Practice, that has the face of a plain Commandment in Scripture enjoining it, than for adding such Rites, as are recommended by new *Emergencies*. †

Non. How does the Author know, or is he able to prove it, if I should demand it of him, that the *Passover* was by *Divine Appointment* to be eaten *Standing*? But suppose it was, this Circumstance was only *Temporary*, and not design'd by God to be *perpetually* obligatory; so that it was not chang'd by any *Authority* of the *Church*, but the difference of Circumstances, and the allowance of God warranted the Alteration. As to *Deaconesses*, whence does it appear that there was ever any such Order in the Churches? Indeed (as one observes) the Apostles "used in their Travels, and other occasions, the services and assistances of Holy Women, who cheerfully administered to their Necessities, " and

" and are thence called *Maximis*, and said *Maximus*. But " how childish is it to conclude an *Order* or *Institution* " on from so slippery a thing as an *Etymology*?* With regard to his Instance of the *Love-feasts*; I have only to say, that he must first prove it to be an Apostolical Institution, before it will serve his purpose, or give any weight to the Argument he seems to confide so much in. But the truth of the matter is, he has not mentioned any one Custom which was of God's appointment, that the Church could pretend to lay aside by any Authority vested in her; and therefore his concluding, that she has a Power of adding any new one is precarious and groundless. And if you will suffer your self to be imposed upon, by such false Reasonings as these you may; for my part, I shall never be fond of parting with any of my Privileges, being resolved, according to the Advice of St. Paul, to stand fast in the *Liberty*, wherewith Christ has made me free, Gal. v. 1.

Con. The *Dissenters* I perceive are at every turn quoting that Text of Scripture; but I can't but wonder at it, when it is nothing at all to their purpose; " for " it is the Determination of the *Judgment* in the *Opin-*
" *nion* of a thing, not in the *use* of it, that takes away
" *Christian Liberty*.†

Non. This must be a mistaken Notion. For if *Christian Liberty*, consists in a meer Liberty of *Judgment*, as your Author insinuates, this is what can never be wrested from us; and I don't see, what occasion there was for the Apostle to bid us stand fast in it; besides, how could Christ be said to make us free that way, when this Liberty of judging was an original Right of humane Nature, and what rational Creatures have ever been capable of. To which I add, that the learned Writer, whose Words your Author has made use of on this Head of *Liberty*, speaks of it with relation to the *Practice* and *Use* of Things; and after your Friend had given his Sense of the Apostle's Exhortation, and by his Approbation of it made it his own; how he could contradict it so soon after, is what I can't but wonder

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* Melius Inquiritur, p. 276. † Lay-man's Pleas, p. 27

v. *Pira 2 Letter* p. 20.

at, but what shall we say? The greatest Men may be guilty of an oversight.

Con. Well, but upon second Thoughts, what is your Opinion of the Argument of better Edification?

Non. My Opinion still is, that it has a weight in it, and I apprehend it to be defensible.

Con. "There is no better Edification to be had any where, than in the Church of *England*; by which I desire you to understand thus much, that no separate Assemblies can furnish you with better Assistan- ces, to make real Improvement in your spiritual Condition.*

Non. If this be your Opinion, there's no doubt but it is your duty to continue in the Cominunion, of which you are now a Member, and I should think you very much to blame, if you did not attend on that way of Worship, which you found most to your Advantage and Edification; but then (as I told you the last time) I hope you will allow me to judge for my self, as well as you; and if I find by Experience, that I make a greater Improvement in my spiritual Condition (to use your Author's own Phrase) by joining with a Dissenting Congregation, than ever I did while I continued in the Church of *England*, sure it is but just, that I should be left to my choice, as well as other People. This Argument I urg'd more fully at our last Conference, and your Friend has not so much as attempted a Reply to it, and until he thinks fit to do so, I may be excused from saying any more about it. As to what he talks of our People's being taken with a Minister's *Tone and Voice*,† though I will not pretend to say, that there are none in our Congregations who are more led by these, than by the solid Evidence of Truth, (because I am sensible, there are a great many weak Persons to be found in our Assemblies, as well as yours) yet I would have your Friend know, that, generally speaking, we are as much against Tones, and nice and speculative Notions as any of you, and perhaps they are as frequently

* Lay-man's Pleas, p. 33. † Ibid. p. 39.

quently to be met with in the Church of *England's* Pulpits, as in ours.

Con. But " it is too notorious to be denied, that a " great many of our *Dissenters* in *England*, have left " the Church only on the account of some dispute " they have had with the Minister of the Parish about " Rights and Dues, and then complain they did not " edify by his Preaching *

Non. There's no doubt, but the covetous and greedy Temper of many of the Clergy, their extravagant and unreasonable Demands, and the trouble they have given People in their spiritual Courts, for not complying with them, has procured them (and it's no wonder) the disrespect of abundance of their Parishioners; and had I been your Friend, I would for the sake of that, have said nothing on this Head. But as for the *Dissenters* (the *Quaker's* only excepted) they pay their *Dues* as readily as those, who are the greatest Zealots for the Church do; and several of the Clergy have own'd it to their Honour, as I my self can testify.

Con. One thing however I am sure is matter of Fact, and that is, there were a great many Persons who would not conform to the Church of *England*, " yet " when a late *Act* was made to prevent the growth of " Schism, rather than lose any Temporal Advantages, " they made a shift to shake off all their Scruples of " Conscience, all the pretences of better Edification, " and conform'd at once, rather than lose any of the " Advantages that belong'd to their Stations. †

Non. Poverty to be sure is a very great Temptation; but if any who were (by Methods which are a *Shame to the Christian Name*) render'd incapable of providing for themselves and Families; have (to keep themselves and theirs from starving) left a way of worship, which they believed in their Consciences to be most agreeable to the Will of God, and consequently most eligible; they are no more to be justified, than those who contrived and procured the Hardships

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which were so ensnaring to them, who have Reason to blush at what they seem to glory in.

Con. If I remember aright, you your self told me, that you could join in the worship of the Church occasionally; and if this be lawful, “ and to be done at any Time, it must be a Duty, which should be done at all Times.*

Non. I own I did tell you so; but must flatly deny the Consequence; in which I am justified by the Apostle, who tells us, *1 Cor. vi. 12.* *All Things are lawful, but all things are not expedient.* “ It was *Lawful* (as a judicious Writer observes) for *David* to eat the *Shew-bread* under his Circumstances, but it would be an extravagant Inference, he ought therefore to do it *always*. —— A conscientious Church-man may believe it *lawful* to hear an *ignorant Preacher*, or an *unpreaching Homilist*, or one of a *scandalous Life*; but will scarce be persuaded, that he ought to do it *always*, if there be better within convenient reach of him.† To which I add, it is *lawful* for the Governors of your Church, to lay aside those *Impositions*, and unscriptural Terms of Communion which are the occasion of our Separation, therefore, according to your Author’s own Notion, it is their *Duty* to do it. But I cannot be so large on these Things as I might, if I had more Time before me. And if you please, we will now consider some of the particular Things, which I mentioned amongst the Reasons of my Non-conformity.

Con. I am as free to it, as you can be. But I hope you have altered your thoughts concerning the *Preaching* of the Church of *England*. “ Your long Harangue against the Country Clergy” (supposing what you said was true) is no Justification of your Practice, “ for unless, the Minister of your Parish, is justly chargeable with every Thing you have said, it can by no means affect your particular Case.||

Non.

* Lay-man’s Pleas, &c. p. 41. † Moderation still a Virtue, p. 56.
|| Lay-man’s Pleas, &c. p. 42.

Non. It is unfair in your Friend to represent me, as speaking against the country Clergy in general, when he knew very well, that I spoke only of some of them. There are many worthy and excellent Persons in several Parts of this Kingdom, who lie buried in Obscurity; and I am well satisfied some Country Parishes are supply'd with Ministers, who (did not their own Modesty, the Narrowness of their Circumstances, and the Discouragements they meet with in the World, prevent their appearing in public) would make a shining Figure in the Church, and shew themselves deserving of some of it's best Preferments. But what I observed about the Preaching which we have in many Places in the Country is to be sure Matter of Fact, and I my self know it to be so. And seeing your Author and I cannot agree about this, and he thinks my Remarks on this Head to be groundless, there is no way of deciding this part of the Dispute, but to appeal to the World, and let them judge between us. In the mean time, I fancy we may compound the Matter thus; since he believes there is better Preaching in the Church of *England*, than there is amongst the Dissenters, and I am persuaded of the contrary, let him follow his Judgment, and I will mine; and on that foot I can't see what Pretence either of us can have to be angry.

Con. But suppose the Minister of the Parish where you lived, was guilty of all the Faults you have taken Notice of, " That would by no means justify your Separation, unless you will affirm that the *Efficacy* of his Ministry depends on his *Personal Sanctity*.*

Non. I have been better taught than to think that the *Efficacy* of Ordinance depends upon a Minister's Qualifications; God I know can Work by the most unlikely Instrument and some times does so; but when a Minister is furnished with good Abilities, and is Conscientious and faithful in his Duty, I have more reason to

to hope that his Labours will be useful to me than another's of a different Character, and you will never persuade me to think otherwise. The *Success* of a Physician, you must allow, depends on *God's Blessing*, and not on his *Skill*, *Care*, or *Experience*; and yet if there are two of that Profession within your Reach, I dare believe you will make use of him who is, in your Opinion, the best of them, and think it a very odd thing, if any one should Advise you to the contrary.

Con. Come we will dismiss that Head, and come to that of *Prayer*. And here, as I remember, the principal Thing you urg'd in Vindication of the Dissenters Practice, was, that in their Way of Praying, a Minister can suit himself to the Circumstances of the People he belongs to: But this "is only Fiction. The most intelligent Person amongst your Ministers does not know the Circumstances of one tenth Part of the Congregation, that meet together for divine Worship in *Salters-hall*; so that he can only suit his Prayers to their Circumstances consider'd as a *Society*. †

Non. Though in a large Congregation, especially where the Persons, of whom it consists, live at a considerable Distance from the Minister, and one another, it is hardly Practicable for him to know the State of all such as attend on his Ministry; yet where a Person has a smaller Number under his Inspection, there are but few Families but what he may be acquainted with if he pleases; and if this was more thought upon amongst us, and you too, Religion would Flourish more every were than it does; but this only by the way. Suppose your Author's Observation be True, that a Minister can only suit his Prayers to the Circumstances of a People consider'd as a *Society*; seeing the Circumstances of *Societies* are so very different, some being very *Ignorant*, and some wretchedly *Prophane*, some compos'd (in a great measure I mean) of young *Converts*, *Weak* and *Doubting Christians*, and others of Persons

† *Lay-man's Pleas, &c.* p. 45.

Persons who have attended to greater degrees of Grace, and made greater advances in the Divine, and Heavenly Life, &c. How can Ministers Suit their Prayers to such various Circumstances without taking the Liberty the Dissenters do? Besides, whatever your Author thinks, the necessities of Christians are not always the same. The methods of Divine Providence towards Mankind are various, and in such a mutable World as ours is, the vicissitudes which we pass thorough must be numberless; so that a Liberty to suit our Prayers to the several *Emergencies* of Life is as useful as it is Reasonable.

Con. As to *Emergent Cases*; " if a Congregation receive any eminent Blessing, such as Deliverance from any Danger, the Minister may in his Prayer in the Pulpit (which our Church allows) return thanks for such mercy. If it is a *National* Blessing, that calls for our Thankfulness, such as the vanquishing of a common Enemy, we have care taken to provide Forms for such extraordinary Occasions."*

Non. I am glad your Friend will allow that there are some *Emergent Cases* which *stated Forms* are not capable of reaching. But what shall we do to Reconcile him, and (his so much admired) Dr. *Bisse*, about what he says concerning the Minister's Prayer in the Pulpit. Your Author declares expressly, that this is what the Church *allows*, the Dr. pronounces it *wholly Superfluous*, and tell us that, *be it of what sort or Size it is not only contrary to the Intention of the Church, but also to the Law of the Land.** You see then Drs. differ as to this Point, and we will leave them to make up the matter between themselves. As to what is suggested about providing of Forms for extraordinary Occasion, I shall observe, that sometimes it has been done, and some times not; but when such Provision has been made, perhaps it has not been in several months after the Mercy has been granted; and why God should wait so long for the Thankful Acknowledgment

* Lay-man's Pleas, &c. p. 46. * The Beauty of Holiness, &c. p. 155.

ledgment of a People, I can see nothing that looks like a Reason.

Con. There may be something as far as I know in this, but your saying that *variety*, in Prayer tends to keep up *Attention*, and that the constant use of the same Word's *damps* your Devotion, is all fancy.†

Non. To what purpose is it for you to dispute against *Experience*? I only told you that for my own part I could not feel that warmth of Affection in using always the very same Expressions in Prayer, as in varying when occasion offered. If you, and others, find the contrary you may pray to God in that way which appears to you to be best, and so will I.

Con. But did not you tell me that you own'd Forms of Prayer to be *lawful*? And if you think they "may be used without Sin; I am sure you are much "in the wrong to urge the having of 'em as a Reason "to Justify your Separation."*

Non. There is a great deal of Difference between having a *Form* of *Prayer*, and being *Obliged to use that Form, and no other*, which last was what I mention'd amongst the Reasons of my Nonconformity, and I don't think I was at all in the wrong in this. There's no doubt but you will allow it to be very *Lawful* to hear a *Homily* read in the Church, but should your Minister always do this, because he would not be at the pains, or had not an Ability to compose a Sermon of his own, I believe you would quickly take your leave of him, and think you had a good Reason for so doing.

Con. Well, "I have read in a noted Author, that "the *Jews* had a *Liturgy* in our Saviour's Time, and "that he was so far from condemning it, that he "himself prescrib'd his Disciples a *Form*, and com- "posed it out of theirs — this plainly proves that "theere were *Forms* of *Prayer* in his time."**

Non. And I have read in as noted an Author, (whose name I am not ashame'd of!) that it, can't be made

† Lay-man's Pleas, &c. p. 46. * Ibid &c. p. 48. ** Ibid. # Mr. Robins-
son's Review, &c.

made appear, that the Jews had any stated *Liturgy*, or that *precompos'd Forms* of Prayer were used among them in our Saviour's time, or before ; and if I should say, this plainly proves, that there were no such Forms made use of, I can't see, why your Friend's Argument would be any Thing more conclusive than mine ; unless he could assure me, that his *noted Author* had the Spirit of *Infallibility*, and every Thing he said was without Examination to be depended upon. I do assure you, Sir, I am so far from thinking *imposed Liturgies* to be of so long a standing as is pretended, that I am well satisfied this way of praying, did not obtain for several hundred Years after our Saviour's Time.

Con. If this was true, " it would have been a most observable *Innovation*, upon the Primitive Christianity ; and the Introducers of such Forms would, it's very likely, have been complain'd of, and severely censured for doing it. *

Non. There are a great many Customs, which have been brought into the Church by degrees, and insensibly gain'd Approbation, and grown up into an Establishment ; and probably so might this. Besides, I am apt to think, when *Forms* were introduced, there was but little of Primitive Christianity left in the World ; the Spirit of Devotion, which warm'd the Hearts of those Disciples of Christ, who lived nearer their Master's Days, was I believe in a great measure extinguis'h'd, and therefore the Introducers of *Forms* were in no great Danger of being complain'd of, or censured.

Con. Do you know of any *Innovation*, that has crept into the Church very early without any Opposition ? " I must desire you to mention one, that was of such a public Nature as this. †

N.n. What do you think of the giving the *Eucharist*, to new baptized Infants ? I suppose you don't believe, that this was done in the Apostle's time, or that it was the Intention of our blessed Saviour, that those

of that Age, who were not capable of answering the Ends of that solemn Institution, should be admitted to partake of so Holy an Ordinance; and yet this was brought very *early* into the Church, and, for any thing we can learn to the contrary, without any *Opposition* too. I may say the same of *Metropolitans* or *Arch-bishops*, who (tho' of an *Humane Institution*, you your selves being Judges) got, in the early Ages of the Church, the same Preheminence and Jurisdiction over ordinary Bishops, that they had over Presbyters, and that (as a very judicious Author, and excellent Historian of ours has observed) *without the least Clamour or Opposition that we read of.** Thus I have gratified your Desire, and I hope you are satisfied.

Con. Notwithstanding all that you have said, I must still think, that *Forms* of Prayer have been of a longer standing in the Church, than you are willing to allow them. "I have read of a *Liturgy*, which (tho' greatly corrupted now) was generally thought to be composed by St. James, and was of a great Authority in the Church of *Jerusalem*.†

Non. Your Author (whose Language you speak) knew very well, that there are several Things in the *Liturgy* attributed to St. James, which prove to a Demonstration, that he could not be the Composer of it, and therefore it was artful in him to insinuate, that it is now *greatly corrupted*. But the truth of it is, this is spoken without any Foundation, for what he calls Corruptions were in all probability in the *Original Liturgy*, and therefore we *cought not to say, that St. James was the Author of it, or that it was composed in his time.*||

Con. "The Learned Mr. Reeves in his *Apologies*, particularly in his *Notes*, upon the *Apology of Justin Martyr*, gives very substantial Reasons to prove, that in *Justin's time*, they had *Forms* of Prayer in the Church.**

Non. The Learned Mr. Reeves, as far as I know, may have better Eyes than the rest of his Brethren.

But

* *Mr. Withers's Truth Try'd*, Part III. p. 61. † *Layman's Pleas, &c.* p. 49. || *Du Pin's Bib. Pat.* Vol. 1. p. 9. ** *Layman's Pleas*, p. 59.

But this I can tell you, your famous Mr. *Bennet*, who I fancy has made as diligent an Enquiry into Antiquity, as to this matter, as most People, and would have seen a Form of Prayer, or any Thing that look'd like one, as soon almost as any Body, does not pretend to go any farther back in his Quotations from the Fathers, than *Tertullian* who flourish'd in the third Century; which makes me believe that there was nothing in *Justin Martyr's* time, which he thought would suit his Purpose, or be of any Advantage to his Argument. Be that as it will; seeing your Author has not thought fit to mention, any of Mr. *Reeves's Substantial Reasons*, he can't expect a Reply to them.

Con. But " it is plain beyond Controversy, that in " the earliest and best Ages of the Church, they had " *Hymns* of Praise, which they constantly used in their " Religious Assemblies — and it is hardly to be ac- " counted for, why they should use *Forms* of *Praise*, " and not of *Prayer*. " *

Non. I think there is nothing more easily accounted for than this. As to those *Hymns* of Praise which were used in the Beginning of the Christian Church, and continued in the succeeding Ages of it, (after immediate Inspiration ceased) they were " set Compositions, " either taken out of the Holy Scriptures, or of their " own composing. For it was usual then for any Per- " sons to compose divine Songs to the Honour of " Christ, and to sing them in the publick Assem- " blies." † These Songs, in all Probability, were in Metre, and sung by the whole Congregation ; so that any one may see, that there was a much greater need of drawing up these in *Form*, than there was of the *Prayers*, which the People only added their *Amen* to. In Singing it was hardly possible to avoid Distraction, without composing such *Hymns* beforehand, but in *Prayer* there was no such Danger.

Con. You will, however, " do well to prove that " we have an express Promise, that the *Gift* of Prayer

* *Layman's Pleas*, p. 50. † *Cave's Prim. Christian.* p. 185.

" which the Apostles had, is to be continued to all
 " succeeding Ages. If you cannot produce such a full,
 " plain Promise, than the Want of that *Gift* must ne-
 " cessarily be supplied by *stated Forms.*" *

N.n. Your Friend would do well to us what he means by that *Gift* of Prayer, which he supposes the Apostles to be furnish'd with. If he means by it a Gift of Prayer by immediate and extraordinary Inspiration, which way will he make it appear that there was such a Gift as that, even in the Days of the Apostles themselves; seeing there is no mention made of it, as I can find, any where in the New Testament, tho' their other extraordinary Gifts, as that of *Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Working of Miracles, Prophecy, Discerning of Spirits, divers Tongues,*, and the *Interpretation of Tongues*, are particularly enumerated. † But supposing there was such an *extraordinary* Gift of Prayer in those Times; seeing God is pleased to continue to us the *ordinary* Assurances of his holy Spirit, and has promised them to his People to the End of the World; Why could not the Want of the former Gift be as well supply'd this Way as by *stated Forms*? If by the Gift of Prayer in the Apostles Time, he means an Ability which they had, by the Aids of Divine Grace, to offer up their Requests to God as Occasions required; this Christians have now, and there's no doubt but it will be continued to all succeeding Ages, our Lord having expressly promised his People the holy Spirit, and told them of his *abiding with them for ever*, John xiv. 16. Which Spirit (seeing we know not what we should pray for as we ought) helpeth our InfirmitieS, Rom. viii. 26.

Con. I perceive you are very unwilling to give up this Point; and yet you own the *Lawfulness*, and in some Cases the Expediency and Necessity of Forms, and tell me that you think the Matter of the Liturgy to be for the most part good, and the Prayers such as you can without Scruple joyn in. And indeed " if

" any

" any Man will lay aside all Prejudice, and carefully
 " read over a late excellent Book, intituled the *Beauty*
 " of *Holiness in the Common-Prayer*, I am apt to ima-
 " gine that he will acknowledge it to be a Form of
 " sound Words, and fitted to promote Edification, if
 " there was ever any such thing since the Apostles
 " Days." *

Non. I am far from retracting what I said of the *English Liturgy*: But tho' I have read over the Book you give such a Character of, (the Author of which talks of God's *establishing an everlasting Covenant* with the *Common-Prayer*; that there is in it no *Inpropriety* either in *Matter* or *Language*; that it is *perfect* in its *Extent* and *Form*, having in it *no Defect*, &c.) I can't yet be perswaded but that there are a great many things in it which ought to be alter'd; and without doubt it would be a great Advantage to the Liturgy, if this was consented to.

Con. I cannot determine what those Alterations are which you have an Eye to; but your saying that you should like the Liturgy much better, if it was drawn up in *Scripture Expressions*, has nothing at all in it.
 " Mr. Baxter says, It is not of such necessity to take
 " the Matter and Words out of the Holy Scriptures,
 " but that we may joyn in a Liturgy, if the Form of
 " Words be not from Scripture." †

Non. If you will be at the Pains to read the *Savoy Conference*, you will find what *Alterations* they were which the *Dissenters* infisted on; and had they been comply'd with, by those who had it very much in their Power, to lay aside the things which were exceptionable, and to add where there was a Deficiency, the Number of *Dissenters* would have been much less than now it is.

You say, from Mr. *Baxter*, that it is not of such necessity to take the Matter and Words of a Prayer out of the *Scriptures*, &c. and I say the same; *But because*, (as the Excellent Bishop *Wilkins* observes) the *Language of Canaan*,

* *Layman's Pleas*, &c. p. 52. † *Ibid.* p. 53.

Canaan, the Stile of the Holy Ghost, is undoubtedly the fittest for Holy and Spiritual Services; ”* therefore I should rather chuse to joyn in such Prayers as are in Scripture Expression.

Con. But “ I don’t see of what Advantage it would be to have our Confessions more particular. Confessions of Sin ought to be such as a whole Congregation may freely joyn in.” †

N.n. Tho’ I agree with you that publick Confessions should be such as the Congregation can joyn in, and that on that Account Ministers are not to be so very particular at such times as when they are acknowledging their Sins in their Retirements ; yet seeing we cannot work up our Minds to too great a Sorrow for, and Abhorrence of our Offences against God, I think the severall *Aggravations* of them (as their being committed against one to whom we have been *infinitely obliged*, against the *Light of the Gospel*, *Convictions of Conscience*, *Solemn Vows*, &c.) should be particularly insisted in ; and it was the Want of this which I complain’d of in the Liturgy.

Con. Let this be as it will, “ your Objection against the Shortness of our Collects seems very ill ground-ed.” ‡

Non. I have told you several times already, that if you and I can’t agree in our Sentiments, you ought to have your Way, and so should I. For my part, I have no Prejudice against the Service of the Church, nor any secular Ends to propose in objecting against any part of it ; but to begin with a solemn *Invocation* of God, by mentioning his *Names*, *Titles*, *Attributes*, &c. and then after a Petition or two, to do the same ; and having kept on for a considerable time in such a manner, to address the People, and say, *Let us pray*, is a Method which I cannot approve of, neither can I be so much affected with it, as I should be if all the short *Collects* were brought into one *Prayer*.

Con.

* *Gift of Prayer*, p. 47. † *Layman’s Pleas*, &c. p. 53. ‡ *Ibid.* p. 54.

Con. " I hope, Sir, the Shortness of a Prayer is not to be found fault with by any understanding Christian — But I suppose you will hardly admit, that as a good Argument to vindicate the Shortness of our *Collects*, that they are upon that Account the more like that *Form* of Prayer which Christ taught his Disciples; because many of your Teachers are utterly against the Use of the *Lord's Prayer* as a *Form*. " *

N.n. I did not find fault with your *Collects*, altogether because of the *Shortness* of them; but because the Parts of Prayer are so often changed and intermixed, that the Mind can't attend to either of them as it ought to do, it having harldy time to fix upon one before it is call'd off to another. As to the *Lord's-Prayer*, you know I told you the Dissenting Minister where I live uses it, and so do most of those I am acquainted with.

Con. But " I find (contrary to my Expectation) that you are an Advocate for those who neglect to use the *Lord's-Prayer* as a *Form*. " †

Non. I was so far their Advocate, I must own, as to mention some of those things which incline several amongst the *Dissenters* to be of that Opinion; and I don't think your Author has said any thing that looks like a Confutation of them.

Con. Your Reasoning on that Head, I think is very fallacious; and since my Friend has put your Argument into a better *Form*, || you must needs be convinc'd of it.

Non. I am oblig'd to the Gentleman for making a Syllogism for me; but to have been fair, he should have mention'd the Premises, before he had come to the Conclusion; and unless he will resolve to do me more Justice the next time, I desire he would be so civil as to let me form my Argument myself. I did not say, that we have no Account that the Apostles did in their Assemblies use the *Lord's-Prayer*; therefore they never did do it. You know very well that I added, that the Evangelist's expressed several Parts of this Prayer in different Terms; that it was frequently omitted by the Primitive Christians,

* Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 54. † Ibid. p. 55. || Ibid. p. 56.

Christians, &c. And what did I conclude from all these things put together? Why nothing expressly; neither was there any other Inference intended than this, viz. that therefore it is very much to be question'd, whether our Lord intended that this Prayer should be used as a *Form*, or design'd it to be any thing more than a *Directory*, and I submit it to the World whose way of writing is most fallacious your Author's, or mine.

Con. He tells you however, that " they who lived nearest the Apostolical Ages did make use of this, as a *Form* in their Religious Assemblies." *

Non. I know he does say so, but I would have you take notice, that there is not one of his Quotations which serve his purpose, as I could easily make appear, if there was occasion; but what need is there of this, when the *Fathers* he mention's as living nearest the *Apostolical Ages*, were all of them of the third Century. This is a gross Imposition on his Readers, and just as much to the purpose as if I should pretend to prove a matter of Fact in Queen Elizabeth's Time, by some who lived nearest that Reign, and then quote two or three Author's who did not write until Queen Anne came to the Throne.

Con. My Friend comes next to consider your " Argument drawn from the Variations in the two Evangelists. †

Non. I know he pretends so, but it is evident to the World that he has not taken the least notice of those Variations which I insisted on, which were the different Words the Evangelists make use of in the fourth and fifth Petitions of the Lord's Prayer, and St. Luke's leaving out the whole Doxology.

Con. Well, but (without insisting on these Variations) " I will allow that Prayer as recited by St. Matthew is a *Directory* for Prayer, but as recited by St. Luke, it is a *Form*. The former was given them in

the

" the Sermon on the Mount —— The latter was given
" to the Disciples upon their own Request." ||

Non. If the Prayer as recited by St *Luke* be that which our Lord has prescrib'd as a *Form*, and that by St. *Matthew* is only a *Directory*, I doubt your Author will have a hard matter to prove that the Church of *England* ever uses the *Lord's Prayer* as a *Form* at all; for in what part of the Liturgy will he find the *fifth Petition* as St. *Luke* has worded it, *viz.* ἡ αὕτη ἡ μαρτυρίας ἡμῶν ἡ γὰρ ἀπειλὴ πάντων δρειλόντων ἡμῶν. And forgive us our Sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us? Besides, allowing St *Luke*'s to be a *Form*, seeing (as your Friend observes) it was given to the *Disciples* upon their own *Request*; Why may we not suppose (with our learned Mr. *Peirce**) that this *Request* of theirs might proceed from a Sense of their own Unskilfulness in the Duty, that they used this *Form* but for a Time, and that after they had gain'd more Experience they took the *Lord's Prayer* only as a *Pattern*, or *Directory*? If your Author thinks this Supposition Groundless, I desire he would prove that the *Disciples* continued all along to use Christ's Words in Prayer, and no other, and that our Lord intended to prescribe an *Invariable Form* to them and all succeeding Generations. And if this can be made appear, what occasion is there of your Liturgy? or how can you justify your performing the Duty we are speaking of, in any other Words, than those which Christ himself hath taught us? Indeed your Friend seems to be of Dr. *Hammond*'s Mind, *viz.* that when our Lord says, *when ye pray, say, &c.* the meaning is, *Whosoever ye pray solemnly, omit not this Form of Words.* † But what they mean by *solemnly* here neither of them, have thought fit to tell us, and therefore it must be excused, if that Paraphrase is not regarded.

Con. Well, I see whatever you pretend, you can't be reconciled to the Use of the *Lord's Prayer* as a *Form*, but no wonder, seeing those of your Persuasion, " sel-

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|| Lay-man's Pleas, &c. p. 57. * Defence of the Remarks on Dr. *Wills*'
Letter to Mr. *Dawley*, part 1. p. 23 † Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 58.

" dom or never read the *Holy Scriptures* in their Publick Assemblies.*

Non. This being the same *Calumny*, as the Bishop of *Derry* would have fixed on the *Dissenters* in *Ireland*, I will answer your Author, as the Excellent Mr. *Boyse* did that Prelate, *viz.* " 'Tis really deplorable, that some Men when they write for a Party, make so little Conscience of Truth, as to offer the most bare-faced Untruths for undeniable Matters of Fact.† Suppose it be not usual (for want of time) to read a Chapter at the *Tuesday's Lecture* at *Salter's Hall*, and that in some of the Congregations in *London*, the *Scriptures* should not be read every Lord's Day (tho' I believe of upon Examination the Number of these will not appear so great as he has represented it) to affirm with so much confidence as he does of the *Dissenters* in general, that they *seldom* or *never* read the *Holy Scriptures* in their Publick Assemblies, is such a notorious Misrepresentation (not to call it by another name, which it better deserves) as he can have no great Satisfaction in the review of. And now what do you think of the *Apocryphal Books*, which are appointed to be read in your Churches?

Con. I think your Objections against these are very frivolous, " I never heard of any in the Communion of our Church, who took the *Apocryphal Books*, to be a part of *Canonical Scripture*, || though I remember that was one thing, you urg'd against the Reading of them.

Non. If you never heard of such an Instance I have.† And I believe, there are thousands in your Communion, who make no Distinction between the *Apocryphal Writings* and *Canonical Scripture*, and I can't see how they should, when *Lessons* are read out of one as well as the other, without laying any thing to shew a difference. Indeed one of your *Articles* takes notice of this; but how many are there among those who attend the service of the Church, who can't read, and among those

* *Layman's Pleas*, &c. p. 38. † *Remarks*, &c. p. 92. || *Layman's Pleas*, &c. p. 59. ** *Dr. Calamy's Defence of Mod. Non.* p. 256.

those that can, how many, who never read the Articles, nor heard them? Such must in all probability be led into an Error; so that though the *Lessons* appointed for the *Lord's-days*, are seldom or never taken out of the *Apocrypha*, and I may come a great many times to Church, and not hear one read from thence; seeing the gross mistake I took notice of before, is apparently countenanc'd, and there are many things in these Writings trifling, impertinent and worse, and your Author does not so much as pretend to contradict it; to which I add, seeing so great a part of *Canonical Scripture* is set aside to make way for these, I can't but look on this as a *Corruption* in the Church, and though I believe I should hardly be a *Nonconformist*, if there was nothing else, which I had reason to make a scruple of, yet I think I may very well mention this, amongst the several other Things which make me a *Diffender*.

Con. Come, if you please, we will leave this Head, and talk a little about the *Sacraments*, and the Exceptions you made against the Administration of them in the Church of *England*. Now in our way of *Baptizing*, I remember you objected against two things, *viz.* *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*, and the *Sign* of the *Cross*, but since I read my Friend's Answer, I think what you urg'd against these Customs was very trifling.

Non. I desire then, you would begin with *Godfathers* and *Godmothers*. Now if you would remember I told you, that with you these are the *only Covenanter*s for Children, the Parents being not required by the *Canon*, so much as to be present. And do you think, that such a Practice is allowable?

Con. "Your first Argument is founded upon a Mi-
"stake — where the *Sureties* are procured by the Pa-
"rents, there they have all the Authority to Covenant
"in the behalf of the Infant, that Parents can give
"them.*

Non. I believe the generality of your Divines agree in this, that it is upon the Account of the *Faith* of the

Parents or *Parent*, that a Child has a Right to Baptism; and if so, why *Sureties* should be required, and the *principal Persons* excluded, is what I believe you can hardly account for. It is not enough I think, to suppose that the Parents do *privately* make the necessary vows in the Name of the Child; but they ought to do it at the time, when the Child or Children are solemnly devoted to God in the Baptismal Covenant. Indeed if the Church thought fit to insist upon a farther Security, something might perhaps be said for such a Demand as that is, especially in some particular cases; but entirely to overlook the Parents in a Transaction of such a great Importance to them and theirs, ay and to reject them too, if they desire to be concern'd in their own Persons, is such Management as will not bear a Justification. Besides, it is a question with me, whether Parents have really a Right to *substitute* others to act for them in such an Affair as this is, and whether, ordinarily, *Sureties* have any power to act as Parties in such a Stipulation; indeed your Author tells us, that "they have "all the Authority to covenant in the behalf of the "Infant, that the Parents can give them"; but where Persons can come and covenant in their own Persons, I doubt that is none at all. Your Friend indeed says, that "in the Primitive Church, the use of *Sureties* was so early, that it is not easy to fix the time of their beginning." * But Mr. *Wall*, a Learned Divine of the Church of *England* tells us, that *the ordinary use then was for the Parents to Answer for their Children*, † and such *Sureties* as these we do heartily approve of.

Con. But how could you say, that some who are hardly pass'd the Age of Children themselves, are admitted amongst us as *Sureties*? Please to read the 29th *Canon*, "and you will find, that none are to be admitted *Sureties* for Children, but such as have received the *Lord's Supper*, which is not (you know) administered to Children in our Church." ||

N. n.

* *Layman's Pleas, &c.* p. 62, † *History of Infant-Baptism*, 2 Edit. p. 612. || *Layman's Pleas, &c.* p. 63.

Non. I know there is such a *Canon* as you speak of, but I know likewise, that all Persons being of the Age of *Sixteen Years*, are admitted to your Communion, if they desire it, and that the *Minister*, *Church-wardens*, &c. are to exhibit to the Bishop, or his Chancellor, the names of all the Parishioners, being of the Age before-mentioned, who did not receive the *Communion at Easter*.* Now I believe you will allow, that there are some of *sixteen Years Old*, who may properly be call'd Children, and have no better Notions of the Nature of Baptism, nor of the Import and Obligation of those Vows which they make, when they are call'd upon to be *Sponsors*, than others have at *six*. Besides, I had no need to tell you, that the *Canon* you mentioned is generally disregarded, the Persons who stand as *Sureties* being seldom or never ask'd, whether they have ever received the *Lord's Supper*. It is then undeniably, that Children are sometimes admitted to perform this Office, and that others do it by *Proxy*; but your Author having declared, that he is no great Admirer of that way. I shall say no more of it.

Con. "Your Third Objection against *Sureties* is
" drawn from the common *abuse* of this Custom,
" which is a very unfair way of Reasoning, *viz.* that
" not one in a Thousand perform what they Pro-
" mise. †

Non. I can't forbear smiling to take notice, that what your Author calls a very unfair way of Reasoning here, is the very same, as he himself made use of, when he spoke of the Right of the People to chuse their own Ministers, for if you mind it, the *Abuse* of this Right was his principal Argument against it. But the candid Reader will consider, that these things stand at a great many Pages distance; and that the Gentleman might forget himself, though by the way, I think a *Censor* ought to have a very good Memory. Supposing then, that my way of Reasoning has been such, as he has represented it, he should for his own sake,

sake, have omitted that Animadversion. However as it happens, it does not in the least affect me, because it was not the *abuse* of the Custom only, which I took notice of, for you know I ask'd you, whether you thought there was, "one in a Thousand, who performs what he promised on such an occasion, or ever intended it, or that could be as good as his Word, had he never so great a mind to it." To which I added. "And can it be well to demand of any, things which are manifestly *impracticable*? * It is very plain then, that it was not Sureties *not performing* the Engagements they bring on themselves, but their *not being able to do it*, that was the Strength of my Argument, and your Friend was very unfair, that he did not represent it so.

Con. For my part I can't see, but it "is in the Power of Sureties to take care that Children be educated in the Principles of the Christian Religion — They are only engaged to do what lies in their Power. †

Non. How trifling is that, to admit those to be *Sureties*, who are really in *no capacity* of performing what they have promised? And then to say, that they are ingaged to do no more than lies in their *Power*, which is, in short, the same as to say, they are ingaged to do nothing at all. And that this is frequently the Case, is as evident as almost any thing. What care, I would be glad to know, can a Person take of a Child when he lives, it may be, at several Scores of Miles distance from him, and perhaps, after the day of his Baptism has never an opportunity of seeing him more? And suppose the case to be otherwise; unless a *Sponsor* will take the Child he promises for, under his more immediate care, which is very seldom done, how he can discharge the Duty of a *Surety*, is a thing I am entirely at a loss for; and I believe, so was the late excellent Bishop of *Sarum*, or else he would not have said, what I mention'd to you at our last Conference, viz. that *no one ought to do this Office for another, but he that is willing*

to

*to charge himself with the Education of the Child for whom he Answers.**

And now if you will, let us hear how your Author Replies to the Objections I made against the Questions and Answers in your Office of Baptism.

Con. He tells you those *Questions* and *Answers* are a solemn Declaration of what Baptism doth oblige all baptized Persons to —— And that, “ All Contracts are “ made by mutual Promises; it is therefore reasonable, “ that when Children are admitted into the Christian “ Society by Baptism (which is a Fœderal A&t) some “ Persons should in their Names promise to fulfil the “ Conditions of the Covenant.†

Non. One of the *Questions* proposed to the *Godfathers* and *Godmothers* in your Office of Baptism, is, *Wilt thou be baptized in this Faith?* To which it is answered, *That is my desire.* Now I can't see, how it can be properly said, that Persons baptiz'd are obliged to this. Indeed antecedent to the Administration of this solemn Ordinance, an *Adult Person* ought to signify his Desire of being admitted to it, before he be received into the Church this way. But to say, that a Person already baptized is oblig'd by that Baptism to desire Baptism, is, such an Impropriety, to say no other of it, as would in the *Dissenters* be thought very ridiculous.

As to what your Friend says of *Contracts* being made by *mutual Promises*; I shall only observe, that if he means, that there can be no Contract, unless both Parties enter into *express Promises* to one another. I think his Notion is not just. In the Covenant which God made with Man in *Innocency*, *Adam's* Posterity were concern'd so far, I mean as to be obliged by it, to perform the Conditions therein insisted on; and yet they neither promised Obedience themselves, neither did *Adam* *expressly* do it for them. Seeing then Parents have so much Power over their *Children*,|| (I mean during

* Pastoral Care, p. 166. † Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 64. || In tempore imperfecti judicis, quando abest plena & generosa omnes Liberorum Actiones directione Parentum subjecuntur. Puffenius de jure Nat. & Genit. 4to. p. 627.

during their Infancy) as to have a Right to transact for them any thing which is apparently for their Good, and such Contracts are undoubtedly Obligatory.* When they devote their little Ones to God in the Baptismal Covenant, (which is evidently of great Advantage to them) tho' no express Promise is made in their Names either by Parents or Sureties, it's beyond all question, they are obliged, when they are capable of it, to perform the Conditions of that Covenant. And let this be taken as an Answer to what your Author objects against the Dissenters Way of Baptizing, viz. *That we have no such Questions and Answers in the Name of the Child as are used in the Church of England.*

The Layman's Pleas is misspaged from p. 64, to the End, and I have quoted it not as the Pages are, but as they should have been.

Con. You did not do well, however, to give out, that it is a common thing for the Sureties to give back the Charge delivered to them, to the Parents. My Friend says, he has " never yet known it done." †

Non. If he has not known it, I have; and that is sufficient for my Justification.

Con. Come, there's enough of this. Let us a little try the Strength of your Objections against the *Cross* in Baptism.

Non. I am not willing to decline any thing in debate between us, neither can I see reason to give up one of my Arguments. As to the *Cross* in Baptism, I did indeed say, (and stand by it still) that there's not one Word of it in the whole New Testament, and that we have no Account of it's having been ever used in the *Apostles Time*. To this your Author replies; " Neither have we any Account that they Baptized in " the Name of the Trinity." || I answer, Your great *Grotius* (whose Words are sometimes regarded as Oracles) thinks, that when we read *Acts x. 48. And he commanded them to be Baptiz'd in the Name of the Lord,* we must understand the whole Sacred Trinity. ‡ But

* Bishop of *Sarum* on 39 Articles, p. 305. † Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 65.
|| Ibid. p. 67. ‡ *Ex nomine Christi tacite intelligitur, &c, qui unxit, Pater, & Spiritus, quo unctus est. Vid. Poli Synop., in loc.*

But supposing it should not be so; we know that it was our Saviour's express Command to his Disciples, that they should baptize Persons in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but of the Cross there is a profound Silence throughout the whole New Testament; and therefore, tho' there should be no Account of the Apostles Baptizing any in the Way aforesaid, we have more reason to believe that they did what their Master enjoin'd them, than we have to think that they used a Ceremony which can never be proved to be by his Institution. What your Friend says again here about the Posture in the Passover, Deaconesses, &c. you know I answer'd before.

Con. Let us then " consider your fourth (and indeed " your strongest) Objection against this Ceremony, viz. " that the Cross (as used in the Church of England) " seems to be as much a Sacrament as Men are capable " of making one, &c. — Your Quotations out of " the third Canon, to prove that it is the Opinion of " our Church that Children are Dedicated to Christ " by the Sign of the Cross, is nothing at all to the " Matter in debate; for since Lay-men are not con- " cerned in the Canons of the Church, how does any " Passage there justify Lay-Nonconformity? " *

Nen. The Design of my mentioning that Canon was, as you know very well, to shew you that the Cross was, in the Sense of your Church, a Dedicating Sign. Now tho' the Laity have no Call to take the Oath of Canonical Obedience, as the Clergy have; yet, seeing the Sense of the Church, we must suppose, ought to be taken (partly at least) from those Canons, those who have Children to be Baptized, and must submit to the Sign of the Cross, or not have them Baptized at all, are to consider what the Church designs by this Ceremony: So that, whatever you think, Lay-men are concern'd, as well, tho' not as much, in that Canon as the Clergy.

L

Con.

* Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 69.

Con. What is all this to the purpose, when "the Church of England both in her Rubrick and Canon affirms, that the Baptism is compleat, and the Child made a Member of Christ's Church, before the Sign of the Cross is made use of?" *

Non. If she thinks the Baptism is compleat without it, I ask'd you the last time, Why Children who have had private Baptism (when the Cross is usually omitted) are requir'd to be brought to the Congregation afterwards to be sign'd? And how she can refuse to admit those to this Ordinance, whose Parents scruple this needless Ceremony, and continue an *Imposition* which so many Thousands of Protestants are offended at? These are Questions which your Author did not care to give an Answer to; and I believe most of his Readers guess at the Reason.

Con. "The Word *Dedicated*, as used in the *Canon*, does signify no more than a *Sign* of our *Dedication* by Baptism." †

Non. If by a *Sign* of our *Dedication*, you mean a Proof or Evidence of it, this can't be; because the Cross is a transient thing, and no Impression is made by which it may be discover'd that the Party has been ever baptized: And indeed, the *Witnesses* who are present on such Occasions, are a much better Evidence in this Case than the Cross can be. Moreover Baptism itself is (according to your own Church) a *Sign* of our *Dedication* to God; so that if your Author's Notion be right, the Cross is a *Sign* of a *Sign*; and why there should not be as much occasion of a *Sign* of that *Sign*, and so en, perhaps he may be able some other time to inform me.

Con. I remember you ask'd me, Why may not a Priest put his Fingers into the Child's Ears, in Token that it shall hearken diligently to the Word of God, &c. as make an airy Cross in his Forehead, in Token that it shall confess a crucify'd Christ? To this my Friend has answer'd, "Because Clergy-men in our Church do

" all

" all things decently and in Order, and they have no Authority to use such ridiculous Rites." *

Non. But suppose the Governors of the Church should, at any time, think it for the Decency and Order of God's Worship to introduce such Ceremonies, then your Clergy would reckon that they had as much Authority to use these as the *Cross* in Baptism; and indeed upon this Principle we may be brought, as far as I can see, to almost any thing.

Con. " Can you observe any Inclination to swell the Number of Ceremonies in the Church? Give me an Instance if you can of any new Rite that has been appointed in your time, or in the Age before you, or indeed since the Reformation. If you cannot, to what purpose do you make an Outcry that the Church may decree Twenty or a Hundred, as well as two or three? Only to prejudice Men against her." †

Non. Did not Archbishop Laud endeavour to bring several new Customs into the Church in his time, as the placing the Communion Table Altar-wise at the upper End of the Chancel, Jetting it North and South, &c. (when the Canon only says, that it shall be placed in so good sort within the Church or Chancel, as thereby the Minister may be more conveniently heard of the Communicants in his Prayer and Ministrations, and the Communicants also more conveniently and in more Number may communicate with the said Minister, ||) and Burying at the first Entrance into the Church towards the East, (which the Bishop himself did not so much as pretend to be allow'd at the Reformation; ‡ and for which his great Friend Dr. Heylin is free to own, there was no Rule nor Rubrick made by the first Reformers.) * And has not Dr. Brett of late, by writing in Behalf of Chrism, Exorcism, Sacrifice and Prayers for the Dead, &c. † sufficiently discover'd an Inclination not only to bring in new Ceremonies, but new Doctrines too into

* Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 70. + Ibid. || Canon 82. ‡ History of England, Vol. III. p. 86. * Introduction to Laud's Life, &c. p. 16. + See his Letter to the Author of the Bulwark Storm'd.

the Church, if it lay in his Power? And are there not a great many of the Clergy who have as good a Will to it as he, tho' they are not as free in publishing their Sentiments? But suppose there should be no such Inclination, (tho' the contrary is plain enough) it may happen in time that such Persons may have the Management of things, as will fancy that we have not Ceremonies enough in the Church, and that the Decency of Publick Worship requires a great many others; and why should Protestant Writers defend a Principle which will justify any *Rites*, which those who are up-
permost may have a mind to bring into God's Service?

Con. I could say something by way of Reply to all this; but "if you please, I would willingly talk with you a little about the *Lord's Supper*??" *

Non. I have been here much longer than I intended, and indeed longer than my Business would conveniently allow me; so that I have not time to talk over with you the several things, which your Author has advanced, in Answer to what I said against the Church of *England*'s obliging all Persons to *kneel* in the Act of Receiving the *Lord's Supper*, and making that a *necessary Term* of Communion. However I have a few Observations to make on this part of the Gentleman's Performance; and I believe they will be sufficient to my purpose, and satisfactory to such as will consider things impartially. And,

1. I observe, and so may you, that your Author does not once attempt to prove, that our Saviour and his Apostles received the *Lord's Supper kneeling*; and if he had, he could never have succeeded in it, it being very plain (from the Account we have of the first Institution of that Solemnity) that they received it in the same manner in which they eat the *Passover*, which your Friend himself allows was a *Table-Posture*. †

2. I likewise remark, that he has produced nothing, which looks like a Proof that the *Gesture* so much contended for by the Church of *England*, was used in

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the Times of *Primitive Christianity*, neither indeed was he able to do it. Your Excellent Dr. *Cave*, who was as exact and curious in his Searches into Antiquity as any of our most celebrated Writers, is entirely silent on this Head; and tho' he takes notice of the Apostles receiving the Sacrament according to the Custom of the Jews at *Meats* at that time, and of the Custom of *Standing* at the Lord's Table, in the time of *Dionysius Alexandrinus*, * yet he has not a Word about *Kneeling*, which to be sure he would not have omitted, had he found any such Practice in the Ages which he gives us the History of.

3. I observe farther, that your Author does not pretend to say, that a Person may not receive the Supper of our Lord as *worthily*, be as much *accepted* by God, and expect as much Spiritual *Advantage* to himself, in partaking of this Sacrament *Sitting* or *Standing*, as *Kneeling*. Now, tho' (as I told you the last time) I believe I should rather perform that great Duty we are speaking of in the Way of the Church of *England*, than not at all; yet seeing I am persuaded in my own Mind that another Gesture is in many Accounts best, and you can never make it appear, that yours is countenanc'd either by Scripture or Antiquity, to oblige me to receive *Kneeling*, and refuse me Communion if I will not do so, (say what you will) is an intolerable *Imposition*, and what you will never be able to justify.

Con. I think now it is my turn to speak, having heard you with a great deal of Patience. And allowing your Observations to be true, I have several things to demand Satisfaction of you, and expect it too before we part.

Non. I fancy my Friend begins to be warm. Well, what Satisfaction do you expect from me? Tell me, and I am ready to give it you as far as I am capable.

Con. I ask you then, why you would affirm *Kneeling* at the Sacrament "to be of no longer Date than "the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*?"

Non.

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Non. I never affirm'd any such thing. I only told you that it was thought so by many great Men, * of which I mentioned one, and your Author has taken notice of several more. If this be a mistaken Notion, they must answer for it, and not I: Tho', by the way, your Friend has not offer'd any think that has the Face of Evidence, that Kneeling was used sooner than the time we speak of; and yet supposing it to be a little older than the *Thirteenth Century*, (tho' that will not easily be proved) this can't be thought to gain it a great Reputation amongst those who know what *Corruptions* the Church groan'd under long before that time.

Con. My Friend, I believe, took the more notice of that, " Because some of your Leaders have been so very kind to tell the World, that *Kneeling* at the " *Sacrament* is *Popish* and *Antichristian*. " But this is a notorious Calumny. In the Church of *Rome* " *Kneeling* is not required, as manifestly appears by the " *Pope's Manner of Receiving*, which is not *Kneeling*, " but either *Sitting*, as it was in *Bonaventure's* time, " or after the *Fashion of Sitting*, or a little leaning " upon his *Throne*, as he doth at this Day. " †

Non. I am apt to think some *Dissenters* have discovered a little too much heat against this Gesture. But yet I can't apprehend your Author's Argument to be a conclusive one. For suppose the *Pope* does not *kneel* in the *Act of Receiving*, does it therefore follow that that *Communion* does not require that Posture, or that *Papists* do not make use of it? This is as weak as it is groundless.

Con. Well, but suppose while our Lord was in a State of *Humiliation*, he condescended to solemnize this *Sacrament* in a familiar Posture with his Disciples; now " he is raised from the Dead, and exalted up " into *Heaven*, — it seems highly congruous — that " the Posture should be changed from the Appearance " of *Familiarity* to that of *Respect*. And with this " excellent

* Lay-Nonconformity Justified, p. 34. † Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 76.

" excellent Argument I conclude this part of our Conference." *

Non. Had our Saviour thought it necessary that the Posture of Receiving should be altered after his *Ascension*, there's no doubt but he would have given his Disciples some Intimation of it; and their Practice, as well as that of the Primitive Christians, would have been accordingly: But seeing we have no such Account, and we have reason to believe that our dear Redeemer, tho' in his exalted State, allows his People all that Freedom with him that is consistent with a becoming Humility and Reverence; I can't see why the same Gesture which he himself made choice of, when he was upon Earth, should not be used still.

Con. I think then, the next thing we have before us is, your saying that there is more care taken to maintain *Purity* in your Communion, than in the Church of *England*. I am afraid this Objection discovers a great Degree of Uncharitableness. " I hope you believe that there are a great Number of good Christians in the Church of *England*; and generally speaking, they that receive the Sacrament there, seem to have as great a Sense of what they are about, as any of our Dissenting Brethren." †

Non. We use to say Comparisons are odious, and therefore you must excuse me if I decline them, especially on this Occasion. I am well satisfied there are a great Number of excellent Christians in the Church of *England*, whose warm and regular Devotion, sacred Zeal, divine Charity, and holy, self-denying and exemplary Conversations are a Credit to Christianity, and an Honour to your Communion; and I wish the Number of these was greater amongst you and us too. But you must not call it Uncharitableness, if I say, I really think there is more care taken to maintain Purity in our Congregations, than there is or can be in yours. I gave you my Reasons for this the last time, and if your Author could have confuted them,

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* Lyman's Pleas, &c. p. 78. † Ibid. p. 79.

to be sure he would have done it; and you may depend upon it, his saying nothing, by way of Reply to 'em, will be interpreted by unprejudiced Readers as an Acknowledgment, that what I offer'd on this Head had a great deal of Truth in it. What great Purity (I would ask you) can there be expected in a Church, when Ministers seldom or never examine such as come to the Communion, and all Persons above Sixteen Years of Age may find an easie Admission to that sacred Ordinance, and no more is required but to signify their Names to the Curate at least some time the Day before; * and if they have been notorious and evil Livers, and have done any Wrong to their Neighbours, to declare that they have truly repented, and have recompenced the Parties to whom they have done Wrong, or at least purpose so to do? This is what the Curate is required to advertise such Persons of by the Rubrick; but if such a scandalous Person professes Repentance, tho' he lives in the Commission of his Sins all the while, he can't be deny'd Communion; and if he be obstinate, and refuses to make such an Acknowledgment, if he will come to the Holy Sacrament, the Minister must give him the Elements, or else (in a case which I mentioned to you the last time) he may sustain such Damages as he and his Family may be great Sufferers by. Now while an Act of Parliament continues "which (as an Excellent Bishop observes) forces Clergymen to give the Communion to any Atheist or Debauchee, who may be named to any civil Office, unless he chuses to be ruined for not doing it." † And when Persons of such a Character (and great Number of them too) must be admitted, and an Attempt to suspend any after their Admission is attended with so much Charge and Difficulty, and so seldom to any good Purpose, you shall judge, whether in those Circumstances, it is possible to keep your Societies as free from scandalous Members, as we can ours, who labour under none of these Inconveniencies.

Con.

* See the Rubrick before the Communion. † Answer to the Representation, &c. p. 50.

Con. Pray give me leave “ to deal plainly with you : By encouraging Separation, you render Discipline impracticable. You teach Men not to value Excommunication, — and then complain that we have not that godly Discipline, which you judge necessary to preserve Purity in our Communion.” *

Nor. Why will you lay the Blame on us, when it's plain to the World that all is owing to a Defect in your Constitution? Never say (my Friend) that we teach Men not to value your Church Censures, you yourselves by your own unaccountable and unchristian Management of them, have justly exposed them to the Contempt of the World; and therefore, (says an incomparable Bishop) “ Whoever thinks seriously either of the Manner, Cause, or Objects of our Excommunications, generally speaking, should, methinks, in pity forbear to mention the Word.” †

Con. What if all that you have insinuated should be true, how will this justify your Nonconformity? “ I hope you are not so uncharitable, as to believe that we have any Abuses in this Ordinance, equal to those in the Church of Corinth. And yet the Apostle doth not persuade the godly Party to separate.” ‡

N.z. To be sure there were very great Abuses in the Corinthian Church: But then you must remember, that the Apostle gives it in charge, that scandalous Persons should be rejected from their Communion; and if no regard had been shewn to this, and Discipline had been neglected among them, we have a great deal of reason to think, that he would have advised to a Separation from the offending Part of that Church; it being his Opinion, that if any Man that is call'd a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, &c. with such a one we should not eat. ** A great Commentator of your own has told us that Tertullian and Theodore say, *cum talibus non vult nos cibum sumere, nendum*

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* Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 80. † Answer to the Represent. p. 38, 39.

‡ Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 79. ** 1 Cor. v. 11.

Eucharistiam, with such we must not eat at our *own*, much less at the *Lord's Table*.* Now, though we will suppose, that *friendly Commerce* and *Familiarity* is prohibited by the *Apostle* in these Words, and that it may be *lawful* to continue in a Society where there are some corrupt Members; because else, it would be a hard Matter to find any which we could hold Communion with at all; yet if I live in a Place where there are two Churches, in one of which none are received who are proved to be openly Scandalous, and all are suspended who afterwards appear to be so; and in the other all sorts are admitted without Distinction, and *Discipline* is entirely neglected; I think the *Apostle* has plainly enough determined what my Duty is in these Circumstances.

Con. I confess the Scripture you mention now seems to me much more to your purpose than that which you quoted last, *viz.* that a *little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump*, *i Cor. v. 6.* "What St. Paul says in that Text is a proverbial Speech, and shews only that Sin is of a very spreading and diffusive Nature; not that it actually defiles where it is not admitted." †

Non. Your learned Commentator, mentioned several times before, paraphrases the Words thus, *viz.* a little Leaven leaveneth and sourereth the whole Lump; so such a Member continued amongst you will *defile* the whole Body or Society.|| And another of your greatest Men thus, *viz.* "As a little sour Dough gives a Taste to all the Bread; so will such a Sin as this, *permitted* in the Church, have an Influence on you all, both by *discrediting* that Church where this is permitted, and by *corrupting* the Company by the *Example*.** Though I am therefore very sensible, that the Sins of other Persons (provided I discover a just Abhorrence of them, and do what I can to have the Society, to which I belong, purg'd of such scandalous Offenders) will

* Vid. *Whitby* in loc. + *Lay-man's Pleas, &c.* p. 81. || *Whitby* in loc.

** *Hammond* in loc.

will never be charg'd on my Account ; yet seeing I am in Danger of being corrupted by bad Examples, I choose (as I told you last) to join with a Society where I find the strictest Holiness. There are some other Things which I urged to strengthen this Argument, but your Author has pass'd them over, and so will I.

Con. I confess these are things which deserve consideration. But you find fault with several usages in our Church, which I thought were too harmless to fall under your Censure ; particularly, the People's reciting the *Psalms*, and *Hymns*, and some Petitions in the Prayers by *Turns* with the Minister.

Non. I only told you, that that custom discomposed me in the Performance of my Duty ; and if I find that I can better attend to, and join in a Prayer, when the Minister only speaks ; why should I not be left to my Liberty ? seeing I never blame those whose Opinion and Experience is different from mine in this Case, or any other.

Con. " You allow the People to bear an equal part " in Singing the *Psalms*, " * and why should they not do so in saying, and singing the *Prayers* too ?

Non. Because it is agreeable to the nature of the Duty for all Persons to join their *Voices* in Singing *Psalms* ; but you can't say the same of Prayer, neither are you able to prove that the *Apostles*, or *Primitive Christians*, perform'd that part of publick Worship, as you do in the Church of *England*. Dr. *Bisse* himself is against the People's saying some of the Prayers aloud after the Minister, and for this reason " left the Sound " of all should turn it into the noise a of *Multitude* and " not the Voice of a Congregation." And soon after, says he, " This too general Custom of repeating the " *Prayers* after the Minister, hath not the least Apology for it self, but that it is a *Custom* : It is doubtless a *Disservice* to the *Worshipper*, as well as a " *Disorder* to the *Worship*. Sure I am, it rather weakens

* *Lay-man's Pleas*, p. 83.

" ens than helps the *Intention* of the Mind; it runs out
 " sometimes into a work of the *Lips*, (as 'tis objected)
 " and not of the *Heart*, too visible among the Ignor-
 " rant Sort, and therefore more excusable: I wish it
 " were only among them, some hastening on before,
 " some coming after, others falling in together with
 " a Promiscuous Uncertainty, insomuch that St.
 " Paul's Reproof to the *Corinthians* in a like Disorder,
 " might be very applicable to many of our Congrega-
 " tions; *should those come in that are unlearned or Un-*
 " *believers*, hearing all speak together, *would they not*
 " *say that ye are Mad.*"* Thus far your Friend's ad-
 mired Dr. Now if the Repeating of *some* of the
 Prayers of the Liturgy *aloud* after the Minister, be such
 a *Disservice* to the *Worshipper*, as well as a *Disorder*
 to the *Worship*, why is it not the same with the *Lord's*
Prayer? And yet the *Rubrick* orders, that that shall
 be said with *aloud Voice*. To be plain with you, it is
 my Opinion that the same things, which the Dr. has
 said against the Custom which he has express'd such a
 dislike of, are true of all your *Responses*, and for the
 Reasons offered by him, I can not approve of them;
 no more can I of your Custom of *Bowing* towards the
East, and at the name of Jesus.

Con. *Bowing* towards the *East* was a very Antient †
 Custom, and I can't see why you should be offended
 at it.

Non. I have not Time to enquire into the Antiquity
 of it, neither do I think it worth my labour. But
 this I will tell you, if it was appointed by the Church,
 as other Ceremonies are, it is such a thing as I could
 never be reconciled to. I will not stay to give my Rea-
 sons, but leave with you the Words of the famous Bi-
 shop *Usher*, viz. " Altho' the gross Idolatry of Popery
 " be taken away from amongst us, yet the Corruption
 " cleaveth still to the Heart of many, as may be seen
 " in

* *The Beauty of Holiness, &c.*, p. 165, 167. † *Lay-man's Pleas, &c.*

" in them that make *Courtesy* to the *Chancel* whre thee
" high *Altar* stood." ||

Con. But why should you speak against Bowing at
the name of *Jesuſ* ?

Non. As that name is Dear to, so it ought to be had
in the highest Veneration by all true Christians; and far
be it from me to blame any for doing Honour to this
Saviour; for I am sure could we pay him a thousand
Times more it would be all due to him. But why the
Canon should order, that due and lowly Reverence
should be done at the mention of the name of *Jesuſ*,
and no notice taken (I mean by any outward Gesture)
of our Redeemer's other names which he is call'd by
in Scripture, is what I could never learn, and if others
like to make this Distinction, it is against my Senti-
ments.

Con. And so is *standing* at the *Gospels*, and *sitting*
at the *Epistles*, is it not ?

Non. Yes.

Con. And why so? " We are sure it was a very
" Antient usage in the Catholick Church, both thro'-
" out the East and West; and our Church conti-
" nues the Practice on the same Account." *

Non. Your Author is very forward with his Quota-
tions on most occasions; but I observe, that though
he pretends to support this *Custom* by *Antiquity*, he
does not mention one Writer to confirm what he
has here asserted; and I the rather take notice of
this, because your very curious and judicious Dr. *Cave*,
when he gives an Account of the Reading the Scrip-
tures in the Assemblies of the Primitive Christians,
says nothing of their *standing* at the *Gospels*, and *sit-*
tting at the *Epistles*, which I believe he would have
done, had he seen a Foundation for it.

Con. You will however consider that " the *Epi-*
" *stles* are the Words of the *Servants*, and at the
Reading

|| Body of Divinity, Fourth Edition, p. 232. + Layman's Pleas, &c;
P. 85.

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" Reading of them they were antiently indulg'd in
" the Posture of sitting ; but they stood up at the
" Reading of the *Gospel*, as being the Word of the
" Master. ||

Non. I remember your Author, just before this last Passage which you have quoted from him, says that, " at the Reading of the King's Commissions, the highest Court among us, even of our Nobles, stand up, and uncover the Head. † Now I shall only ask him, Whether the *Epistles* are Christ's Commissions, or not ? If not ; How are they to be regarded as canonical ? and the Contents of them as obligatory ? If they are his Commission, or by Commission from him, or, if you will, inspired by his Spirit, and consequently the Doctrine contained in them of equal Authority, as if it came from his own Mouth, why should not the same Respect be shewn to them, as to the Gospels themselves ?

Con. I fancy you have made a better Defence on this Head, than you can pretend to do of your Exception against *Instrumental Musick*, which is used in some of our Churches. I will be much " obliged " to you, if you'll furnish me with a good Argument, to prove that a Tune upon the *Organs* is not " so agreeable to the Simplicity of the Gospel as *Vocal* " *Mulick* is.*

Non. I am willing to oblige so good a Friend ; and therefore my Argument is in a Readiness, and because you shall see that some Dissenters have read a little Logick, as well as those who are educated in your famous Universities, you shall have it in Form, *viz.*

I F *Vocal* Musick is recommended in the New Testament, and was practis'd by the primitive Christians, but *Instrumental* not ;

Then

* Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 85. † Ibid. * Ibid.

Then *Vocal* Musick is more agreeable to the Simplicity of the Gospel, than *instrumental*.
 But *Vocal* Musick is recommended, &c.
Ergo, &c.

If your Friend thinks fit to call upon me for a Proof of either of these Propositions, I am prepared for him; in the mean Time I shall wait his Answer.

Con. Organs and other musical Instruments are
 " Helps to raise the Spirits in the Praises of God, and
 " may be used for that End. ||

Non. Our Saviour knew best what would help to raise the Devotion of his Disciples, and if he had thought that *Instrumental* Musick would have had that good Tendency, I am well satisfied he would have given us some Hints of it. Upon the whole, though *Instrumental* Musick was a Part of the Jewish Worship, and "belonged (as one very well observes) to the *Temple Service*, which was but "Ceremonial and *Typical*, it must be abolish'd with that Service; and we can have no Warrant to recall it ihto the Christian Church, without as particular an Institution for it, as it had under the Law, any more than we have to use any other abridged Rites of the Jewish Religion.*

Con. And are you of the same mind about the *Holidays*, which our Church has appointed? What you urg'd last from the *Fourth Commandment*, will by no means serve your turn. The Importance of that Command is only this, "That when that Precept was first given, God left Mankind free for *Six Days*, and only reserved a *Seventh* for Rest and Religion; but that did not limit himself, nor all other lawful Powers, from making farther Impositions, for Rest and Religious Exercises.†

Non.

|| Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 85. * Remarks on the Bishop of Derry's Discourse, &c. p. 17, 18. † Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 86.

Non. I don't think the Article about *Holidays* is of so much consequence, as a great many other Things in Conformity; and therefore I shall say the less of it. As to the *Antiquity* of these Days, I refer you to Mr. Peirce's Answer to Dr. Nicholls, where you will find your Arguments on that Head, fully considered and reply'd to. With regard to what your Author offers about the *Fourth Commandment*, I have only to say, that if God by that left Mankind free for *Six Days*, I can't see how their time can be taken from them. Indeed in case of signal Salvations, which have been wrought out for a People, as those which we commemorate on the Fifth of *November*, no Body questions, but that Authority may call upon us to spend some time in a thankful Acknowledgment of such extraordinary Deliverances; and indeed the very Law of Nature seems to teach us as much as this comes to; but to argue from hence, that therefore Church Governours, may take from us so great a part of that Time, which God has allowed us for our own Employments, as the *Holidays* required by the Church of *England* amount to; and that on the slightest grounds; and when any other Days of the Year (as far as they know) ought with more Reason to be observed, than those which they have fixed upon, is in the Opinion of many, doing what they can produce no warrant for.

Con. I am unwilling to detair you much longer, because you seem to grow uneasy. But I can't forbear taking Notice of your talking of an Obligation you apprehended your self under, to own an *injured Ministry*. " You have certainly obliged the *Non-jurors* ver-
" ry highly, and press'd a Duty on them, to appear
" for and stand by an *injured Ministry*. *

Non. I desire your Friend would not be angry at my Freedom. But I must tell him, that if the *Non-jurors* had not more and better Friends amongst those of his Church, than they meet with amongst the

Dissen-

Dissenters. Their Hearts would quickly fail them, and they must either play the Hypocrite's part, and take the Oaths to get Bread, (which I am afraid is the case of a great many more than we think of) or follow the Fate of their *Master*, and go to him to be kept from Starving. Besides, though your Author does not care to distinguish between the case of *Protestant Dissenters*, and the *Non-jurors*, the World is not so much over-grown with Prejudice, but that there will be some found (and of his own Communion too) who will be able to see, that the *Non-jurors* refuse to give the Government that Security, which it's Preservation calls for, and are aiming at the ruin of it; and therefore there can be no pretence for calling their's an *injured Ministry*; but you dare not say any Thing like this concerning us.

Con. " This specious Pretence might have passed at " the *Restoration*, when the *Usurpers* were obliged to " quit their Preferments to make room for the right " Owners, but I can see no Reason, why it should be " urg'd now. †

Non. The most of those who were oblig'd to quit their Preferments, at the Time your Author refers to, were (as a Reverend and Learned Writer of ours takes notice) as legal Possessors of them, as those who came into them, after they quitted them, upon their refusal to conform, * and tho' your Friend calls them *Usurpers*, future Ages (to whom their History and Hardships will, I hope, be transmitted) will think that they were an *injured Ministry*. As for those amongst us, who have been bred and ordain'd Ministers since; 'tis true, they were never deprived of any Church Livings, because they never had any, and in that Respect their Case is not the same with that of their suffering Fathers; but then it ought to be considered, that they are rendered incapable of doing God that service,

N

which

* Lay man's Pleas, &c. p. 87. Dr. Calamy's Account of the Ministers, Preface to Vol. 2.

which they are qualified for, which I think is an injury to the Interest, and to them too. This, Sir, is the wrong, which they complain of; and yet they don't charge the Government with this neither (tho' that is insinuated †) for they know the fault is somewhere else. However, we are heartily thankful to God and our Governours, that the Liberty, which as Men, Christians, Protestants, and good Subjects we have a right to, is continued to us; and if our Ministers cannot be so useful as they might be in other Circumstances, we are sorry for it, and think our selves oblig'd to adhere to them, while they endeavour to do what Service in the Church they can, tho' they can't do what they would.

Con. But why should you mention the difference, that there is between our *Cathedral* Devotion, and that of the *Parish* Churches, the *Diffuse* of some of our *Canons*, and the Denial of several of the *Articles* by some of the Clergy, &c. Suppose what you advanc'd on these Heads was true, I can't imagine, of what advantage it could be to you to mention these Things.

Non. If you remember, you told me, you could not see how the *Unity* of the Church, could be maintain'd without a *Uniformity* in Worship.* This gave me occasion to shew, that there was no entire *Uniformity* amongst your selves, and therefore some or other of you must, upon this Principle, be guilty of a Breach of Church *Unity*. This I thought a sufficient Answer then, and so I do still. That there are those Differences in your own Church, which I hinted to you, your Author may endeavour to conceal and deny too if he pleases: But it is enough for me, that the World knows, what I have said to be true, and if a want of *Uniformity* in Opinion and Practice, be such a Crime in us, I would fain know, why it is not so in you likewise?

Con.

† Layman's Pleas, &c, p. 32. * Lay-Nonconformity Justify'd, p. 43.

Con. " You say, that the *Episcopal Clergy*, and
" their Hearers in *No. th-Britain*, are Separatists from
" the Established Church there; and we don't reckon
" that Church *Unity* is broken upon that Account.
" No indeed, we do not any more than we thought,
" the *Unity* of the Church was broken by the *Episco-*
" *pal Clergy*, and those that adhered to them in *Eng-*
" *land* in the Time of the *Usurpation* of *Oliver Crom-*
" *well*, when *Presbyterian Church Government* was
" settled in a great part of the Kingdom.*

Nen. I could almost have wish'd, that you had
pass'd by this Paragraph in your Friend's Book, that I
might not have been put on Replying to it, because if
the words are not unadvised, (which I would willingly
believe) they are something worse. Does not the
Gentleman know, that the Church of *Scotland* is as
much *Established*, as that which he professes himself a
Member of? Is it not supported by as *valid* Acts of
Parliament, and has it not had the same Countenance
from the Throne in the late *Queen's* Time, and since
his present *Majesty's* happy Accession to it? And would
your Author set it on the same foot (as he seems plainly
to do) with a Government sett'l'd in the Time of
an *Usurpation*? Pray, when you see him next, advise
him to express himself with a little more Caution; for
tho' I make no Inferences from his Words, some others
may.

Con. I perceive then, that you think the Pleas made
use of by you, will warrant your Separation; but
" it's plain they cannot in the Judgment of the *Old*
" *Nonconformists*, who tho' they would not subscribe
" to the *Ceremonies*, yet they were against Separation
" from the Public Worship upon the Account of
" them.†

Nen. Should I take no notice of what your Author
has said concerning the *Old Nonconformists*, I am per-
suaded such an Omission could be no real Prejudice to

* Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 91. † Ibid. p. 92.

my Argument; because if I have Reason, the Word of God, and the Example of the Primitive Church on my Side, the Opinion of others is what I need not be solicitous about. But yet I can't forbear observing to you, that the Sentiments of the *Old Nonconformists* are very much misrepresented. Certain it is that they wrote very much against the *Brownists*; who gave out, that the *Parish* Churches were no *true* Churches, nor to be joyned with as such; that the *Parish* Ministers were no *true* Ministers, because ordained by *Dioceſans*, and not chosen by the People, &c. But Mr. *Baxter* has demonstrated to the World, that notwithstanding this, they were not against ſuch a Separation as has been ſince pleaded for. This he proves from a Book of Bishop *Bancroft's* againſt them, charging them with dividing themſelves from their ordinary Congregations, and meeting in Houses, Woods and Fields, erecting *Presbyteries*, drawing up a Book of their *Discipline*, and prosecuting it, agreeing in a *Synod* againſt private Baptiſm, the *Cross*, ordering *Parents* to offer their own Children to God in that Ordinance, and be *Godfathers*, &c. upon which *Canons* were made againſt them, many cast out and ſilenced, ſome cast into *Prifons*, &c. If you have a mind to ſee a fuller Account of their Case, the 4th chap. of *Baxter's Second true Defence of the meer Nonconformists*, will give you abundant Satisfaction. Now either your Author will allow the things which are ſaid of these *Nonconformists* to be true, or he will not. If he will not, he fixes an indelible Mark of Infamy upon ſome of his own Church, who (upon this Suppoſition) drew up Charges againſt them which were groundleſs and false, and persecuted them for nothing. If he allows the things which *Bancroft*, &c. accused them of to be Matters of Fact, then the Judgment of the *Old Nonconformists* is on our Side, and not his, tho' he has taken ſo much Pains to make the World believe the contrary.

Con. I confess, if the Account you give be true, I think my Friend might have left out what he has ſaid concerning the *Old Nonconformists*; but if their Sentiments

ments were as he has represented them, your Separation is condemn'd out of their Mouths, for "the Terms of Communion with our Church were the same then as they are now." *

Non. So your Author is pleas'd to say: But I thought he had known that the Act of Uniformity was not in being at the Time we are speaking of, and that Communion with the Church of England might be had on easier Terms before that Law than since. Indeed there were the same Ceremonies, Liturgy, &c. used then as now, but the *Imposition* of them was not so rigorous; Ministers were more at their Liberty; and by consequence those of the Laity, who scrupled any of those Usages which we now except against, were not obliged to such a Compliance with them, in order to the obtaining Admission for themselves and their Children to the Priviledges of the Gospel, as they are now.

Con. But you see Mr. Baxter himself was for those things, which you mention as Grounds for Separation.

Non. That Great Man was a Person of a very extensive Charity, and spoke as far as he could in the Behalf of People of all Denominations, and never cared to have any thing in a Dispute carried farther than was just and reasonable. But while his *English Nonconformity*, his *Treatise of Episcopacy*, &c. are in the World, no one will believe that he liked our *Dioceſan Episcopacy*, or that he was a Friend to the Ceremonies and Discipline of the Church of England, much less to the *Imposition* of them.

Con. I remember you ask'd the last time, Why (seeing we reckon the things in dispute to be *indifferent*) we do not lay them aside to promote Unity. But my Friend leaves the Answering of that Question to the Governors of our Church? *

Non.

* Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 92.

† Ibid. p. 96.

Non. I own I did ask that Question, and I thought it no trifling one. You know very well, that the Dissenters are, at every turn, charg'd from the Press and Pulpit, as guilty of *Schism*; and such as is of so heinous and aggravated a Nature, that if they live and die in it, their Salvation is hardly to be so much as hoped for. Now seeing the *Ceremonies* of the Church are, by these very Gentlemen, acknowledg'd to be *indifferent*; methinks, in Charity to so many Souls, who are, as they think, in so much danger of perishing, they should cheerfully consent to part with them; and how they will answer for not endeavouring to get this done, I leave to their serious Consideration.

Con. It is my Friend's Opinion, "that no considerable Body of the Dissenters will ever be brought into the Church by such Alterations as you plead for." †

Non. How does he know how many of the Dissenters would come in upon such Abatements, when they were never tried. He knows, I suppose, what was desired in the Treaty at the Savoy; and why should he not think that the same Concessions which would have satisfied then, will now? Besides, if the Church would come to a Temper, tho' the Success should not answer Expectation, the Blame would no longer be thrown on her, and others would be left the more inexcusable. "Let us do our Duty, (says a great Divine of your own Communion) and commit the Event to God, rememb'ring these excellent Sayings and Observations of the Fathers, that the Apostle used this Condescension in things indifferent, *irr & abh*; *wis*, though by so doing he would save but few; that he did it *& irr*, even for the Salvation of one Person; and therefore, perhaps, it may become our worthy Governors, in Imitation of St. Paul's Example, to endeavour to save some of the Dissenters,

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" though

[†] Layman's Pleas, &c. p. 96.

" though they should be but few, from that Destruction
" which their Schism may bring upon them." *

And now, my Friend, it's time I was going; and therefore have no more to say, but that it shall be my earnest Prayers that God would direct us in the Way of Truth and Peace, and bring us to that World, where we shall see things in an unerring Light, and all our Differences shall be at an End for ever.

Con. This is a Prayer, to which I heartily say,
Amen.

* Protestant Reconciler, p. 326.

F I N I S.

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